

**EFFECT OF ALCOHOL CONTROL POLICIES ON REGULATION OF ILLICIT
BREWS TRADE IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA.**


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DECLARATION

This project is the product of my own research, and it has not been submitted for a degree or any other academic award at another university or educational institution.

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This research project has been submitted with my approval as a university supervisor.

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To begin, I'd want to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Robert Obuba, my superior. It would not have been possible to navigate the complexity of this research without his consistent direction, support, and professional knowledge. Thanks to his guidance, I was able to refine my idea and develop as a researcher.

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My strength comes from the people who were always there for me when I needed help or motivation. Without your presence and willingness to contribute, the road to completion of our plan could have been considerably more arduous. I hope that the universe rewards your generosity with happiness and fulfilment.

Finally, I swear that I have not sent in this proposal somewhere else for credit towards a degree or any other academic honour. It's a symbol of not only my dedication, but also the hard work of everyone who has helped me along the way.

ABSTRACT

Alcohol-related problems exist in Kenya, despite the fact that county governments are primarily responsible for regulating the alcohol trade within their territories and establishing new regulations. The purpose of this study is to analyse how policy regulation has affected the sales of alcoholic beverages in Meru County, Kenya. The goals of the research are to determine how much of an impact licencing laws, enforcement laws, compliance with regulatory requirements, and cultural factors have on the regulation of the illegal brew trade in Meru County. This research aids the Meru County Alcohol Regulation Board and the Kenyan government as a whole by providing crucial data for regulating the alcohol industry. Eric Single's availability theory and Sully Ledermann's single distribution theory were used in the study. Descriptive research methods were utilised, and the sample size was 349 people from 38 different towns and cities in Meru West Sub County. Ten percent of the sample population, or 35 booze dealers, were chosen to ensure a statistically valid representation of the population as a whole. Five towns were selected from three wards in Meru West Sub County using a multistage cluster sampling strategy, and seven alcohol sellers were chosen from each town using a snowball sampling technique, for a total of 35 participants. One member of the County Licencing Committee, one sub-county commissioner, two chiefs, four assistant chiefs, and two police officers were selected at random from the population of the research area to serve as key informants and provide their perspectives through interviews. Questionnaires and interview guides were tested for validity and reliability before use in the data gathering process. A preliminary test was run in a city that wouldn't be included in the main research. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data, and the results were displayed as percentages, frequency tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. Content analysis was performed on the qualitative data. The National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), Kenyatta University, and the respondents all gave their consent for this study to be conducted. According to the findings of the study, the licencing of businesses dealing in alcoholic beverages, the establishment of alcohol licencing legislation, and the application of penalties have all played important roles in controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages in the county. Corruption, however, undermines the implementation of alcohol trade rules in Meru County, making the problem of illegal brews difficult to solve. The research also found that most retailers of alcoholic beverages do not keep to the required business hours, despite the fact that many producers do conform to labelling regulations. Sometimes, people under the legal drinking age are sold alcohol. These results suggest that the County government should start a public awareness campaign on the importance of enforcing the laws against illegal breweries. It is important to assess the efficacy of licencing measures in curbing the illegal spirits trade. Successful regulation of illegal brews would also be facilitated by the government conducting periodic audits of alcohol enterprises to guarantee compliance with the appropriate policies.

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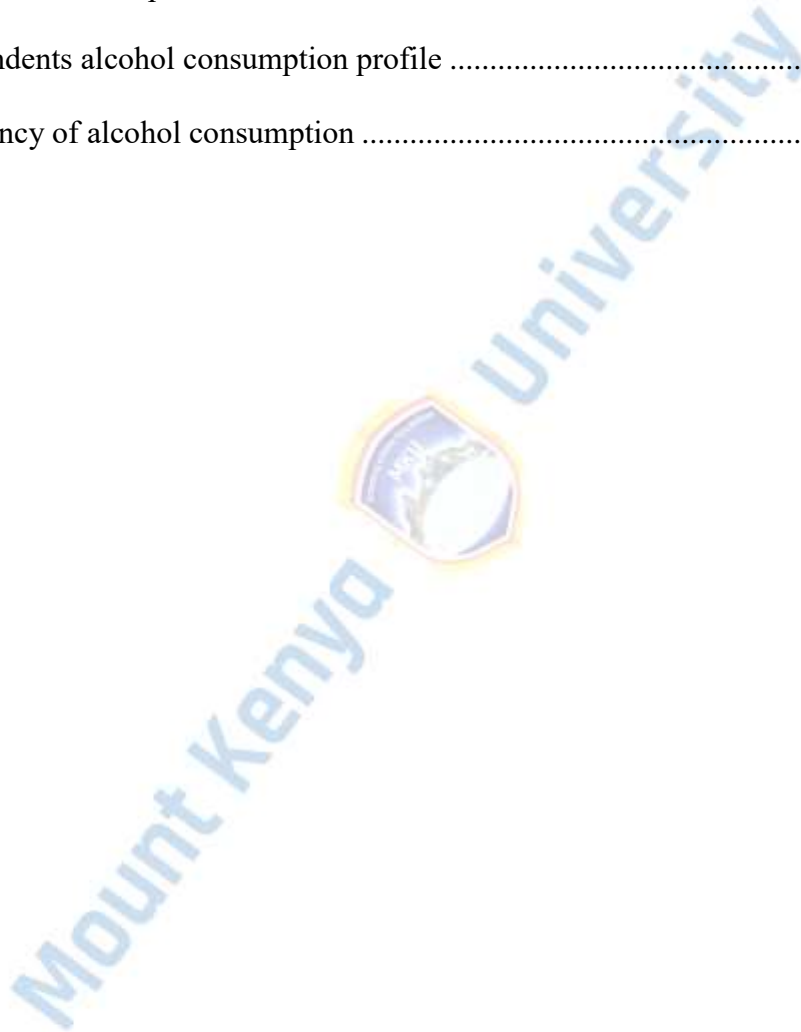


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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDA: American Indian Development Associates

NACADA: National Agency for Campaign against Drug Abuse

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

OLCC: Oregon Liquor Control Commission

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

WHO: World Health Organization



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

There is evidence to suggest that alcoholic beverages have been known to and used by human cultures for thousands of years (Birech et al, 2013; Wang et al, 2021). Freeman and Perry (2006) suggest that the consumption of fermented drinks like wine, beer, cedar, mead, and others has been popular in virtually all human groups for thousands of years, and that this trend can be traced back to a variety of biblical references and ancient sources. These drinks were rarely exchanged and drank immediately after being produced locally (WHO, 2012). Alcohol has been utilised as food, medicine, a mood booster, and a means to an end (intoxication) by people of various cultures throughout history. Many ancient cultures' religious and cultural rituals would not have been possible without alcohol (Witkiewitz, McCallion, & Kirouac, 2016). There are several situations where alcohol is useful in today's society. For example, wine is used sacramentally in the Roman Catholic Church and is an integral part of many cultural rites such as marriages, circumcisions, and peace negotiations. Wine is used as an anaesthetic by traditional surgeons as well (Witkiewitz et al., 2016). Alcohol has become the most extensively overused narcotic in the world despite its numerous beneficial effects on human societies (Farhoudian, 2021). The harmful effects of alcohol have prompted initiatives to standardise the industry, regulate enterprises, and limit use. Due to differences in production methods, alcohol concentration, packaging, and licencing requirements, some alcoholic beverages have been legalised while others have been made unlawful. According to the World Health Organisation (2011), the prohibition of illegal brews was spurred by the negative health effects of alcohol consumption and dates back to the years 1919 to 1933.

Surrogate alcohol, artisanal spirits, and counterfeit copies of industrially created alcoholic drinks have significant historical roots in the countries that were once part of the Soviet Union (Probst et al., 2020; Shield & Rehm, 2021). It is common practise for moms in the northern area of Peru to serve their children alcoholic versions of traditional home-brewed drinks on certain occasions (Bloomfield, 2020). However, recent tendencies suggest that this type of manufactured alcohol is making its way into mass manufacturing in a number of countries.

Small factories can be found in almost every town in rural China, and they create the traditionally home-made spirits known as baijiu (Lee et al., 2020). Although home distillation is permitted in many countries, in India it accounts for about half of all alcoholic beverages drunk (Furr-Holden et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2015). In contrast, both the manufacture and consumption of homemade alcohol are sanctioned by law in India. Northern European countries such as Finland and Sweden have high rates of alcohol smuggling (Pantani et al., 2020). Methanol, which is not required to be listed on alcohol labels, can cause severe poisoning or even death. This is cause for alarm because, unlike ethanol, which is subject to regulation, unrecorded alcohol is not, and is often marketed at a lower price per unit. (Green et al., 2020).

Alcohol consumption has been a part of African culture, rituals, traditions, and customs since ancient times (Heather, 2017), despite the fact that African societies have historically implemented strict social structures and regulations to control and define who can consume alcohol, when it can be consumed, and for what purposes.

In 1980, as a direct response to the city's economic expansion in 1978, the Chang'aa Prohibition Act was passed. The making, selling, buying, and owning of chang'aa were all outlawed by the new law. Producing, distributing, selling, using, or possessing any traditional beverage or liquor was made unlawful by the Act. But illegal alcohol was still widely

available, especially in outlying areas where law enforcement was either absent or complicit in the industry.

Under the Act, administrative officials and police officers were given the right to enter and inspect premises at any time if they had probable cause to believe that chang'aa was being manufactured, stored, marketed, supplied, or used on the premises. It is possible to arrest the property's tenant, seize the chang'aa, and issue a warning to anybody else on the premises if any distillation equipment, apparatus, or utensils are discovered (Kenya Law Reports, 2010). Even though laws were put in place, compromise and corruption eventually became the norm.

Illegal brews continue to be a leading source of preventable death and blindness in Kenya, despite current laws. In 2000, 113 people died and 390 were hospitalised due to the effects of illegal brew (Carey et al, 2015). The government felt compelled to intervene despite the fact that legislation already existed on the subject.

According to Kenduiwa (2012), the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act, 2010 went into force on November 22nd, 2010, thereby repealing the Chang'aa Prohibition Act (Cap 70) and the Liquor Licencing Act. Several goals were in mind when this new law was drafted, including mitigating social problems including alcohol-related violence and poverty as well as improving people's health (Mututho, 2014). The Act gave the government the power to regulate the brewing, bottling, selling, labelling, advertising, sponsoring, and consumption of alcoholic beverages. This was done to safeguard customers from being duped by false or misleading advertising (Kenduiwa, 2012; Kenya Law Reports, 2010).

Failure to comply with the Act may result in legal action, fines, and even jail time. Large fines were imposed for the distribution of alcoholic beverages that had been tampered with or tainted with nonalcoholic ingredients (Kenduiwa, 2012; Kenya Law Reports, 2010). To

prevent minors from gaining access to alcohol, the Act also limited the time bars could be open and the distance they could be from schools.

While Musungu and Kosgei (2015) point out that the Alcohol Control Act, passed in 2010, did successfully cut down on the manufacture of illegal brews in Kenya, there is still evidence of alcohol usage and extensive production of illegal brews across the country. Many law enforcement officials, despite the success of some operations to shut down illicit breweries, have said they feel unsafe without armed protection during large-scale raids on such facilities (Carey et al., 2015). Police departments may be aware of illegal beer production, but it is difficult to enforce sobriety rules due to a lack of personnel.

Devolving authority over liquor licences is an encouraging step towards decentralisation and citizen participation in policymaking (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). It is difficult for illicit brewers to compete due to the severe legal criteria required by various laws and regulations, according to Kelly et al. (2015). Local brewers spend an average of Ksh. 40,000 on the permits, licences, and permissions they need from agencies including the Kenya Revenue Authority, health authorities, and zoning authorities. According to Mututho (2014), counties can fill the financial void created when this function was transferred to the county administration by issuing liquor licences. In certain areas, the number of bars has already surpassed the number of schools, despite previous efforts to limit the availability of alcohol. This has hampered official efforts to combat alcohol-related problems and dampened morale among law enforcement officers.

Due to the rising number of deaths associated with illegal brews, President Uhuru Kenyatta issued a decree in July 2015 ordering the closure of all illicit alcohol companies in central Kenya and the arrest of their proprietors (Muregi, 2017). In response, producers of legitimate brands like Keroche Breweries petitioned the High Court for an injunction, alleging that the

government's directive to destroy illegal booze was unconstitutional. The court concluded that presidential directives must be in writing, as was not the case here, citing Article 135 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The court further ruled that the Respondents' actions were unjustified because they ignored evidence demonstrating the Petitioner's business and products were lawful and in possession of legal licences from the same entity that was attempting to cancel those licences. According to the court, the respondents' behaviour was illogical.

Having multiple rules in place to combat illegal alcohol production, distribution, and use is a difficulty for Kenya (Mwangi, 2018). Instead of working together, the organisations tasked with reducing illegal alcohol production often find themselves in conflict (Muregi, 2017).

Despite strict limits on alcohol production, commerce, and use, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua told the Daily Nation on April 15, 2023, that alcohol usage was still a problem in many counties in the Mount Kenya region. Particularly widespread is the use of illicit brews in Meru County. According to studies conducted by Gitari, Chaka, and Godrick (2020), an abundance of illegal alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages have a negative impact on the residents of Meru County. An item published in the Daily Nation on December 9, 2022, states that residents of Nyaki East, Meru County, have petitioned the president to address the prevalence of dangerous alcoholic beverages in the area. Some "drinking dens" are allegedly supplied by rogue merchants who make and distribute illegal alcoholic beverages at night, as reported by residents. Young people regularly spend their evenings drinking, and some residents regularly spend their entire evenings drunk. A major portion of the young population in Meru County does not have access to employment possibilities, which has a negative impact on the local economy.

The administration of Kenya's Meru County passed the Meru County Alcoholic Drinks Control Act in 2016 to combat the huge problem of illegal spirits trading. The new rules are

meant to give police and other local authorities more flexibility to crack down on illegal alcohol sales in the county. The ordinance sought to reduce alcohol-related problems in Meru County by mandating that all alcoholic beverages sold within the county obtain a licence from the county government. Former Governor Kiraitu Murungi signed this law into effect during his administration (Gitari, 2023), requiring businesses to get licences from the county government and NACADA. In addition to prohibiting the distribution of alcoholic beverages in plastic containers, the regulation mandated the registration of second-generation liquor manufacturers with the County Liquor Licencing Board. The number of bars and liquor stores was another target of the legislation. The overarching purpose of these policies was to promote health, social well-being, and economic development through the regulation of licencing, production, sale, distribution, consumption, and advertising in the alcohol industry. This investigation examined how the implementation of alcohol control measures in Meru County, Kenya, has affected the control of the black market for alcoholic beverages.

1.2 Problem Statement

Colonial authorities in Kenya sought to maintain control over labour by prohibiting the production and consumption of traditional beers, also known as illegal brews, except for ceremonial occasions (Kihuria, 2014; Gikonyo, 2017). During this time, bottled beer was restricted to white people only. Because of this, hidden bars sprung up across Africa to supply the drinking needs of those who couldn't buy bottled beer (Kihuria, 2014). Colonial Kenya had no written regulations regarding traditional brews until 1903, when the British established the Legislative Council to implement British colonial legislation domestically, including the regulation of alcoholic beverage consumption (Mututho, 2014). since a result, there was a boom in the black market alcohol industry in Kenya since manufacture and use of traditional brews, particularly those for ceremonial purposes, were severely banned.

The primary reason people drink alcohol is to have fun (Griswold et al., 2018). However, illegal beer production is a major problem in Kenya (Muregi, 2017). The high tariffs on legal alcoholic beverages, which make them unaffordable for those in low-income conditions, contribute to this growth in production (Muregi, 2017). Therefore, many Kenyans, especially in rural regions like Imenti South Sub County, may feel they have no alternative but to ingest these potentially lethal mixtures. Illegal brewing is common even in countries with well-established legal frameworks (Hecklé, 2019).

Numerous data show that the prevalence of illegal brews and the frequency of alcohol-related deaths in the country persist despite the existence of spirits legislation. Keria, in Meru County, was the target of a government operation to eliminate illegal breweries on June 29, 2020, commanded by then-Interior Principal Secretary Karanja Kibicho (Standard Digital, 2020, June 29th). A chief and seven subordinate chiefs were removed from their positions during this operation for enabling the brewing and consumption of illegal alcoholic beverages. On the same day, government officers also took part in the destruction of illegal alcohol. This circumstance highlights the necessity for research into the factors that contribute to the expansion of the illegal brewing trade despite efforts to curb it. The purpose of this research was to examine how Alcohol Control Policies have affected the control of the illegal brewing industry in Meru County. In particular, it examined the issues of legalisation, regulation, and compliance, as well as the cultural and social context of the illegal alcohol trade in Meru County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research was to assess the effect of alcohol control measures on the management of the black market for homemade alcohol in Kenya's Meru County.

1.4 Specific objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To examine how Meru County's licencing rules affect the control of the black market for alcoholic beverages.
- ii. To determine the impact of enforcement measures on the control of the black market alcohol trade in Meru County.
- iii. To Examine the impact of regulatory restrictions on the control of the black market for alcoholic beverages in Meru County
- iv. To investigate how cultural norms impact enforcement efforts against illegal alcohol sales in Meru County.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. How do Meru County's licencing policies affect the control of the black market for alcoholic beverages?
- ii. How does enforcement policies affect regulation of illicit brews trade in Meru County?
- iii. To what extent does conformity with policies requirements affect regulation of illicit brews trade in Meru County?
- iv. What role do cultural norms and values have in the enforcement of laws against the sale of illegal brews in Meru County?

1.6 Rationale of the study

Illicit brews, commonly known as "chang'aa" or "busaa," are unregulated alcoholic beverages that pose significant health risks to consumers. These brews are often produced under unsanitary conditions and may contain harmful substances, leading to health issues such as alcohol poisoning, organ damage, and even death. Studying the impact of alcohol control policies on illicit brews trade is essential for safeguarding public health.

1.7 Significance of the study

The purpose of this study was to shed light on the roles and responsibilities of county government agencies and alcohol sellers in the management of the illicit brew trade in Meru County as a result of alcohol control regulations. Researchers and organisations already working to combat alcohol misuse could learn useful things from this study. The results may prompt the consideration and implementation of new laws and policies to tighten control over the black market for alcohol. It is clear from this study that limiting the sale of alcoholic beverages will benefit the people of Meru County in many ways, including their social lives, their wallets, and their health.

1.8 Scope of the Study

While the study's conceptual framework was driven by the extensive literature analysis, the study itself relied solely on primary data collected from alcohol vendors. Chiefs and assistant chiefs in the Keria, Ndafu, and Mitunguu regions of Imenti South Sub County, as well as police officers in the Nyaki East region of Imenti North Sub County, were among the key informants. The County Licencing Committee and the Sub County Commissioner were also consulted. Limiting the scope of the research to legitimate businesses involved with alcoholic beverages was a priority. The study's primary focus was on understanding how different social and cultural elements in Meru County affect the distribution of illegal alcoholic beverages. The study was conducted between July 2023 and September 2023, when illegal brew production is normally at its highest because to the timing of the harvest.

1.9 Limitations

The need to conduct interviews with people who may have been impaired by drink or drugs was a drawback of the study. These people might not be completely cooperative, and they might even be hostile at first. Researchers addressed this difficulty by developing strong rapport with respondents and urging them to be open and honest in their responses.

1.10 Delimitation

The county of Meru was the region of attention for this investigation. Researchers were able to zero down on the county because of this decision and its distinctive drinking and brewing culture. Focusing specifically on Meru County, the research looked at how cultural norms, economic considerations, and law enforcement obstacles could affect the success of alcohol control policies in reducing the black market for booze. In addition, the researchers limited the time period being studied to the preceding five years. This made it possible to assess the impact of recent changes in alcohol control legislation on the black market brewing industry in Meru County.

1.11 Assumptions of the study

The study assumed that;

- i. The law enforcement officers in Meru County have been working together to control the sale of illegal spirits.
- ii. There are policies in place in Meru County to deal with brewing, trade and consumption of illicit brews.
- iii. The research relied on the participation of the sampled respondents during the time the survey was conducted.

1.12 Operational Definition of Terms

Alcohol abuse: Impairment of one's ability to function as a result of drinking to excess. For the sake of this analysis, "day drinking" means alcohol use at any time of day, including the early hours of the morning.

Alcohol: Describes an alcoholic beverage prepared in one's own kitchen, den, or factory.

Chang'aa: Literally meaning "kill me quick," this alcohol is distilled from maize and sorghum and then accelerated in fermentation using jet fuel and embalming material from morgues.

Conformity with policies: refers to adhering to the rules, regulations, and guidelines set forth by an organization or governing body. These policies may include legal requirements, industry standards, internal company policies, or government regulations.

Enforcement policies: refer to the set of rules, regulations, and procedures that guide and govern the enforcement of laws, regulations, and policies by governmental or organizational entities

Licensing policies: refer to the rules and regulations set forth by organizations or individuals to control the authorized use, distribution, and protection of alcohol trade in this study

Socio-cultural factors: refer to the social and cultural influences that shape the attitudes, behaviors, and values of individuals and communities. These factors can have a significant impact on various aspects of society, including education, politics, economics, and social interactions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 begins with a literature analysis that was useful in elucidating licencing regulations, the roles of enforcement authorities, and the extent to which alcohol vendors complied with policy requirements relating to the control of the black market in Meru County. This chapter also sheds light on the ideas that provided backing for the investigation and lays out the conceptual framework that served as the research's north star.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Various theories on alcohol control outline different approaches to policing the industry. To examine the mechanisms of alcohol trade control, this study used two prominent theories as a basis: the Availability Theory and the Single Distribution Theory.

2.2.1 Availability Theory

Understanding the role of various legislative and administrative entities in regulating alcohol consumption has been greatly aided by epidemiological research. This has been a consistent field of research, with Loxley et al. (2004) citing numerous studies that find associations between high rates of alcohol consumption and a variety of health and social problems in a given area. The concept of alcohol availability plays a pivotal role in this field of inquiry.

In 1988, Single defined an early version of availability theory, focusing on three related but separate hypotheses that influenced how people thought about the connection between alcohol availability and consumption. One of Single's original hypotheses was that wider availability of alcoholic beverages would lead to an increase in overall average consumption (Single, 1988). The second part of this theory proposed that an increase in average consumption would cause an increase in the prevalence of binge drinking. Finally, it was

stated that because heavy drinking is associated with negative health and social outcomes, its prevalence in the population will increase (Single, 1988).

Since Single's seminal works, the theory has progressed thanks in large part to the efforts of Stockwell and Gruenewald (2004). By taking into account how variations in availability can uniquely affect certain demographic or socioeconomic groups, and by further factoring in other drivers of drinking behaviour, they reconceived the central premise of availability theory. They brought attention to the complex link between alcohol accessibility and consumption by claiming that a decrease in real price (including both retail price and convenience expenses) is necessary for a rise in the mean intake. In addition, they hypothesised that alcohol availability impacts alcohol-related problems in a society by influencing the extent to which alcohol is drunk in social settings as opposed to alone or at home (Single, 1988).

The effects of these convoluted dynamics extended far beyond simple measures of average consumption. An increase in the population's average intake may cause differences in drinking patterns amongst demographic groupings, as emphasised by Stockwell and Gruenewald (2004). According to the regular drinking habits and routines of the community, these differences can subsequently translate into various health and social concerns. As a result, depending on these factors, there may be a disparity in the distribution of risks and outcomes among different subgroups.

Stockwell and Gruenewald (2004) rethought the relationship between alcohol availability and use and came to the opposite conclusion of previous research. Instead, the increased availability and subsequent increased consumption will be the result of changes in the total price of alcohol. They contended that the only methods that would be effective in lowering alcohol use would be those that intended to reduce availability in ways that influenced the complete parameters influencing the full price of alcohol (Chikritzhs et al., 2007).

The policymaking process stands to benefit much from this detailed understanding. It highlights the importance of implementing regulatory measures that take into account the complex interplay of supply, demand, price, culture, and consumer behaviour. Limiting access is only part of the solution; knowing how this influences behaviour in tandem with other variables is essential.

The complexity of alcohol regulation is reflected in the history of availability theory, from its conception in Single (1988) to its subsequent development by Stockwell and Gruenewald (2004). Due to the complex nature of these interactions, designing efficient treatments requires a similarly diverse strategy. To effectively regulate alcohol use, one must first get a thorough grasp of the economic, social, and behavioural factors that contribute to alcohol consumption in any given community.

2.2.2 Single Distribution Theory

When the price of a good or service rises, the quantity required of that good or service falls, as long as all other parameters remain constant. Consumers' responses to price fluctuations depend on their individual demand elasticity (Schmidt & Popham, 2008). Market forces like price and availability have a direct impact on consumption, making this notion especially significant in the context of alcohol regulation.

The sensitivity of alcohol trade to price changes suggests that an increase in taxation or a general reduction in availability would be expected to decrease overall alcohol consumption. This expectation is corroborated by various pieces of indirect evidence, which demonstrate the effects of market forces on the frequency of heavy drinking.

One critical aspect of this understanding is the distribution of alcohol consumption within a population. For a subgroup of drinkers whose behavior is relatively insensitive to changes in alcohol-related factors within their socio-economic environment, the amount of alcohol

consumed by the heaviest 10% of drinkers may have limited impact on the drinking patterns of the rest of the population.

Ledermann's studies on consumption distribution provide a valuable perspective on this subject. According to Ledermann's distribution law, there exists a clear correlation between per-capita intake and the number of individuals consuming more than a specified threshold, such as three ounces of pure alcohol per day (Skog, 2006). Through extensive examination of this law, significant variations were identified relative to average consumption levels. Ledermann consequently concluded that an effective means to regulate heavy drinking within a community could be achieved by reducing per-capita consumption.

This observation is further supported by the work of Bruun et al. (2009), who contend that a government's efforts to decrease the number of heavy drinkers must involve a concerted strategy to reduce total alcohol consumption. Their argument is grounded in the nature of consumption distribution: if this distribution is highly skewed, then a considerable proportion of total alcohol consumption is attributable to heavy drinkers. Consequently, a significant decrease in overall consumption is unlikely without addressing the habits of these heavy drinkers.

Moreover, Bruun et al. (2009) emphasize that the drinking levels of extreme alcoholics are influenced by many of the same legal, cultural, and socioeconomic forces that affect other consumers. The correlation between consumption at the 95th percentile and median levels demonstrates a strong enough relationship to warrant serious consideration in policy development and implementation.

Expanding on these insights, it becomes evident that the relationship between price, availability, and consumption of alcohol is complex and multifaceted. Effective regulation necessitates a comprehensive understanding of not only the economic factors but also the underlying social dynamics that influence drinking behavior.

For instance, pricing techniques might be used in tandem with campaigns to raise awareness and educate the public about a certain issue. Heavy drinkers, whose consumption patterns may be less responsive to general price hikes, may be more amenable to targeted interventions. To inform more sophisticated policy responses, additional study of the influences of cultural norms, advertising, and peer pressure on drinking behaviors is warranted.

In conclusion, controlling alcohol use is a complex issue that calls for a wide range of solutions. Price elasticity and other economic principles are important, but so are the broader social and psychological contexts in which they exist. Researchers like Ledermann (Skog, 2006), Schmidt & Popham (2008), and Bruun et al. (2009) provide light on the intricacies of the issue and suggest ways to improve the efficacy and specificity of regulatory approaches.

2.3 Empirical Literature

2.3.1 Regulation of Illicit Brew Trade

The process of regulating the sale of alcoholic beverages is a complex one that involves a wide variety of parties, with licensing boards playing an essential part in this process. The number of participants in the industry, the kinds of products that are sold, and the character of the market as a whole are all controlled by the licensing boards, which play an important role in the process of shaping the industry.

Moore et al. (2010) highlight the significance of the licensing system as a vital component in the process of empowering other regulatory and enforcement bodies. Licensing authorities are able to facilitate the implementation of laws and policies that govern the location, character, and density of alcohol outlets through the process of selecting which traders are permitted to engage in the commerce of alcoholic beverages. This extends all the way to the

regulation of pricing policies across licensed shops, demonstrating even further the multifaceted nature of the function that licensing boards play.

A study that was carried out in Brazil by Duailibi and colleagues (2010) throws light on the significance of laws and regulations that pertain to the commerce of alcohol. According to the findings of their study, putting limits on business hours had a discernible and salutary effect, which resulted in a drop in the number of killings. The study indicated a substantial difference in the number of homicides between periods in which the sale of alcohol was permitted twenty-four hours a day and periods in which sales were forbidden from midnight to six in the morning. This finding underscores the effectiveness of regulatory measures.

These studies shed light on the complexities of alcohol control; nonetheless, it is critical to acknowledge that the effectiveness of such programs is not exclusively dependent on the actions of licensing boards. According to Rehm et al. (2001), effective enforcement by administrative officers is also quite important.

These officers are extremely important to the process of limiting and controlling the amount of alcohol that is available to the general people. Because easy access to inexpensive alcohol can disrupt regular drinking habits and lead to chronic drinking, the tasks of law enforcement personnel in monitoring and enforcing rules regarding the sale of alcohol are of the utmost importance.

However, the success of these procedures is contingent on the honesty and reliability of the department in charge of enforcement. According to Partanen (2009), even the most stringent rules will be ineffective if there is widespread corruption within the organization responsible for their execution. The illegal trade in alcohol can be reduced or even eliminated entirely by the combination of strong regulation and ethical enforcement of the law.

In light of what lies ahead, it could be desirable to investigate further how joint efforts between regulatory organizations, enforcement agencies, and the community can lead to a

more complete and effective approach to alcohol regulation. Continuous training and support for administrative officers, combined with participation from the community, has the potential to build a system that is more accountable and transparent.

Conducting research into best practices from a variety of areas and countries could provide helpful insights into the process of building regulatory frameworks that are more adaptive and responsive. Studying the effects of various pricing models, restrictions on advertising, and public health initiatives focused at educating consumers about responsible drinking are all examples of this type of research that may be conducted.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of licensing boards, when combined with conscientious enforcement and well-considered laws, is a component of alcohol regulation that is both complicated and essential. The evidence that was presented by researchers such as Moore et al. (2010), Duailibi et al. (2010), Rehm et al. (2001), and Partanen (2009), when taken as a whole, shapes our knowledge of this complicated issue and gives a way toward more effective regulation..

2.3.2 Alcohol Licensing and regulation of illicit brews trade

The sale of alcoholic beverages in Kenya is subject to the same licensing requirements as other types of businesses in the country. A contract between two companies known as a "licensing" agreement provides one party with the legal right to make and sell a product while granting the other party the right to do so in exchange for a fee. According to Doherty and Roche (2003), license payments are typically a small proportion of total sales. Through the purchase of a license, a company has the opportunity to use preexisting channels of manufacture, distribution, and promotion, which may provide them an advantage over their rivals. Once license is in place, dishonest merchants are discouraged from participating in the market and only legitimate merchants are permitted to participate (Chikritzhs et al., 2007). The licensor grants the licensee the right to exercise control over the distribution of the

licensed products or services. For example, licensing systems are designed to restrict the activities of the black market in order to safeguard customers from potentially harmful vendors and items. Under this strategy, obtaining a license is essential for restricting the distribution and marketing of illicit goods and services that are detrimental to the psychological, social, and physical environments of individuals.

Around the world, a wide array of government agencies and non-governmental groups are in charge of issuing licenses to sell alcoholic beverages. Because of the myriad ways in which the states in the United States can differ from one another, residents of each state are required to obtain a license specific to their state. The laws of the jurisdictions in which a license is going to be used will dictate the specifics of the license that are going to be issued. According to Oregon (2018), the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) is in charge of monitoring and controlling the sale and distribution of alcoholic drinks throughout the state. These statutes address a variety of broad categories, including the hours of operation, locations, techniques, and prospective customers for alcoholic beverage sales. According to Triangle Accounting (2018), it is common practice in American pubs and restaurants to restrict the quantity of drinks that a single customer can purchase in a given time period. These restrictions might apply to both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. The results of a poll that Wagenaar et al. (2000) carried out in which they asked the public for their thoughts on the various laws and regulations that exist between states revealed that the vast majority of respondents were in favor of licensing. There was a lot of support for licensing and limitations on the promotion and sale of alcoholic beverages, as well as the prohibition of alcohol in many public contexts. Additionally, there was a lot of support for restricting where alcohol can be promoted and sold.

The revenue that the government receives from licensing is significant. In addition, the government issues licenses in order to regulate the conduct of commercial activities. The

standards for obtaining a license help to promote both the health and the safety of the general population. The government keeps a careful check on a wide variety of enterprises and industries on a regular basis through the use of a system of rules (Bruun, 2009). This is done to protect citizens' wallets, people's health, and the fabric that holds their communities together. If you or your business wish to produce or trade alcoholic items in Meru County, or if you want to manage an alcoholic establishment, you are required to obtain a license from the County Liquor Licensing Committee in the sub-county where you want to set up shop, and you are required to pay a fee in order to do so (Kamau, 2014). It is the responsibility of the County Liquor Licensing Committee to assess the application and provide a response. The committee will receive input from the Sub County Liquor Licensing Advisory Committee as part of this process. In this way, the many authorities collaborate to ensure that the county is risk-free and secure for everyone.

In addition, the market needs to be protected, which is why licensing is necessary. The government issues licenses as a means of protecting both established businesses and those that are still in the process of growing and developing. The government is able to eradicate unethical company practices that pose a danger to legitimate ones with the assistance of regulations. Lutta (2016) describes corruption as a widespread problem in Kenya, which lends credence to this assertion. In several counties in Kenya, progress and prosperity are severely hampered by the widespread presence of official corruption. The overwhelming majority of residents have the impression that county and sub-county officials are aware of the underground alcohol trade. For instance, the authority to grant liquor licenses has been taken away from certain sub county officials in the county of Meru. According to the findings of the Liquor Licensing Board (Kamau, 2018), the administrators have issued multiple licenses to establishments like bars and restaurants that do not deserve them. After finding that only 150 applications had been granted by sub-county stakeholders but that 400 licenses

had been given by sub-county personnel, residents of the Meru Central sub-county vowed to attack the office of the Governor (Kamau, 2018). These residents live in the Meru Central sub-county. Phillip Nzugo, a County Commissioner, informed the audience of this information. Also, according to Muriithi (2018a), two officials, Samuel Mwangi Mureithi (the Director of Liquor Licensing for Meru Central) and Joseph Mureithi Njeru (the Meru Central sub-county administrator), were demanding and accepting bribes of Ksh 300,000 from the proprietors of alcoholic establishments in exchange for issuing them licenses to sell their products. This was done in exchange for issuing them licenses to sell their products.

The Meru County Drinks Control Bill of 2014 (Kamau, 2014) creates a system of licenses for the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages within the county. These permits are required in order to legally sell and distribute alcoholic beverages. There are several different kinds of licenses that must be obtained in order to lawfully sell alcohol, import alcohol, or produce alcohol, and all of these licenses must comply with the requirements of the Act in order to be valid. The Act, on the other hand, makes it illegal for anybody in Meru County to produce, manufacture, or distribute alcoholic beverages unless they have a license to do so. According to the legislation, every citizen of Meru has the right to submit an application for any type of license. Both the County Liquor Licensing Committee and the Sub-County Liquor Licensing Advisory Committee are going to look over the application before making a decision. The application should be granted the license by the county Liquor licensing committee once the required money has been collected and the sub-county advisory committee has determined that the applicant is qualified. In the event that the application is turned down, the sub-county advisory committee will send the petitioner a letter outlining the reasons for the denial. Before deciding whether or not to grant a license to operate a business in that location, the committee will take into account a number of factors, such as its closeness to the school and how well it is maintained overall. The Act controls the alcohol industry by making it unlawful

for any licensed business or individual to produce, store, or sell alcohol to anybody who is under the age of the legal drinking age. New laws to govern the selling of alcoholic beverages have been enacted as a direct result of the increased manufacture of illegal alcohol in Meru County. The legislation's goal is to restrict the distribution of alcoholic drinks by discouraging the sale of illegal brews and the unlawful manufacturing of local liquors (Gathura, 2015). This will be accomplished by making it more difficult to buy and sell illegal liquors and brews. In this regard, the county administration intends to reduce the number of pubs and liquor stores in an effort to enhance citizen engagement and improve the transparency of government (Njenga, 2015). [Citizen engagement] refers to the process by which citizens participate in the decision-making process of their government. In addition, the policy intends to disregard borders in its pursuit of the goal of preventing illegal alcohol from entering the Meru County area. Some of the illicit alcoholic beverages are reportedly created in Nairobi and supplied all over the Mount Kenya region, as stated in a report that was compiled by Chief Dorothy Gaitenga of the Mwea East police station (Kibisu, 2019).

According to the findings of an investigation that Lenk et al. (2014) carried out to investigate the methods utilized by state and local law enforcement authorities to combat the practice of selling alcoholic beverages to visibly drunk clients at licensed establishments, they discovered that this behavior was widespread. The research looked at all 49 agencies in the state that dealt with alcohol enforcement and used a random sample of 1082 out of the total of 1631 local agencies to compile its findings. According to the findings of the research, rules that prohibit the sale of alcohol to those who are clearly intoxicated are a method that is underutilized by law enforcement in their efforts to reduce alcohol-related risks. The paper offers valuable insight into the difficulties that must be overcome in order to implement licensing regulations. It's possible that the situation is comparable to what happened on Meru because it's famously difficult to put even the most basic licensing rules into reality.

Despite the challenges it has faced, the Liquor Licensing board has been an essential component in Meru County's success in controlling the alcohol industry. According to a report by the Standard Digital and a piece authored by Munene (2018), for instance, the Board has exploited legal gaps in order to grant licenses to proprietors of bars located in locations or structures that are not permitted to function as liquor Outlets Company. According to the management of the board, the number of liquor outlets has decreased from 1,400 to 700 over the past several years (Munene, 2018). As a result of the ban on the production and sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County, the Board has also turned down applications for brewing licenses. In 2015, following an uproar from the general public, the board was finally successful in closing down 12 alcohol-brewing plants that were of the second generation.

2.3.3 Enforcement policies and regulation of illicit brews trade

Laws in Kenya pertaining to alcoholic beverages, such as the Alcohol Drinks Control Act of 2010, have been enacted with the intention of controlling and regulating the availability of alcohol in the country. The passage of this legislation was motivated by a number of different goals, including preventing alcohol from falling into the hands of children, educating the general public about the risks associated with drinking, and providing treatment options for people who have already succumbed to alcoholism (NACADA, 2012). The implementation of alcohol drink control aims to protect the general population from the harmful effects of alcohol misuse, minimize the number of health issues that are caused by alcohol use, improve people's lives in general, and defend societal values. According to Lacey and Jones (2008), sobriety checkpoints have been successfully implemented in a number of countries, leading to a drop in the number of people driving under the influence of alcohol.

Research conducted by Achieng (2013) on Kenya's Alcohol and Drinks Control Act and other legislation that controls the alcohol trade in the country found that high alcohol use continues

to occur throughout the morning and early afternoon, when people are at their most productive. Achieng's research was conducted on Kenya's Alcohol and Drinks Control Act and other legislation that controls the alcohol trade in the country. This suggests that individuals do not adhere to the authorized drinking hours, which are from 2:00 PM until 11:00 PM. According to the findings of her investigation, the most vulnerable part of the system is the lack of enforcement. Her criticism suggests that the key actors in the alcohol trade sector have set up various legal barriers to the implementation of the Act, which has led to more public pushback in the courts. Despite the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act of 2010, also referred to as the Mututho laws, many Kenyans continue to drink alcohol, putting themselves and their children at risk of the negative consequences of the substance. This is a claim that is supported by Gathura (2015), who notes that many Kenyans still engage in this practice. In response to this ban, manufacturers of alcoholic beverages developed innovative packaging that was suited for drinking in one's house, which ultimately led to an increase in sales. According to the findings of the research, Kenya has a liberal policy on the selling of alcoholic beverages.

In order to put a stop to the production and distribution of unlawful alcoholic beverages, the Meru County Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill, 2014 is being enforced by county government agencies in conjunction with other state and local organizations. However, because of widespread corruption and a lack of decisiveness on the side of the government, the fight against illegal commerce continues to be a significant issue in Meru (Munene, 2016). As an illustration, the proprietors of drinking facilities often bribe the officers in charge of licensing. Dishonest businesspeople are able to sell alcohol because law enforcement authorities, whose job it is to guarantee that the law is followed, are making it easier for them to do so. It is not unheard of for local authorities to collaborate with establishments that deal in alcoholic beverages in order to promote the production and marketing of "new" alcohol within the

county. According to Muriithi (2020), it is believed that three assistant chiefs in the villages of Igoji, Nyaki West, and Ndafu are conspiring with the brewers. During a crackdown operation against all illicit booze selling outlets that was launched by the county commissioner (Kenya National Agency, 2020 April 4th), at least seven chiefs and assistant chiefs who cooperated with the brewers were terminated from their positions. When it comes to putting a stop to the distribution of alcoholic beverages in Meru County, the role that law enforcement plays is quite essential. The fight against the distribution of alcohol, on the other hand, would be pointless without the active participation of both the authorities and the people living in the area.

The county government plays an essential role in ensuring that county business is conducted in an effective manner. When it comes to the regulation of alcoholic beverages, the county administration maintains consistent communication with a number of different agencies, most notably the national government. The county administration of Meru County works in collaboration with local administrators to battle cartels involved in the production and distribution of counterfeit alcoholic beverages (Muriuki, 2016). This is done in an effort to prevent the next generation from being wiped out by illegal brews and preserve the human race. According to the Constitution of Kenya, which was ratified in 2010, the county government is required to enact and carry out the execution of county laws in order to more effectively coordinate and administer county administrations and agencies. According to Kamau (2014), the administration of Meru county has enacted severe new regulations that restrict the licensing of places that sell alcohol in an effort to exert more authority over the alcohol trade inside the county. Because of the new laws, local authorities have been successful in closing down thousands of establishments, including both businesses and bars. According to the Standard Team (2013), the purpose of the Meru County Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill of 2014, which was enacted as a reaction to the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act of

2010, was to strengthen licensing requirements and fight corruption in the alcohol sales industry.

In order to ensure that the rules governing the sale of alcoholic beverages are followed to the letter, the county administration collaborates with the police and the jail. The officers and investigators that make up the law enforcement agency have the responsibility of maintaining order and finding those responsible for breaking the law. The upkeep of order, the response to pleas for assistance, the assistance of victims, and the prevention of criminal behavior are the responsibilities of law enforcement officers. According to Doherty and Roche (2003), the police play an important part in the regulation of the alcohol and drug trade. In addition to protecting citizens and responding to the manifestation of harmful behaviors such as assaults, theft, and domestic abuse, the police are also responsible for protecting citizens from harm.

The widespread availability of alcoholic beverages of a "second generation" in Kenya has prompted local law enforcement agencies all around the country to increase their enforcement efforts against the sector. The police department has made it a top priority to cut down the supply of illegal alcohol through increased patrols and collaboration with the authorities in the surrounding communities (Martin, 2013). For instance, law enforcement in Meru County has eradicated vast volumes of illegally produced beer after seizing and disposing of it. The police in Meru County have made great headway toward their goal of regulating the alcohol trade (Muriithi, 2018a; Kamau, 2018). This has been accomplished by making arrests of county officials, municipal authorities, and bar owners who illegally produce or distribute second-generation booze (Muriithi, 2018a; Kamau, 2018). The enforcement of the rules governing alcohol licenses is a significant responsibility of the police. In addition, the Meru County Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill of 2014 requires the cooperation of the police in the procedures surrounding the issuance of licenses. These procedures include the evaluation of companies to determine their eligibility for liquor licenses. In addition to this, they make sure

that the licensed business only sells alcohol in the acceptable amounts to the authorized people at the appropriate times. As the law requires, this ensures that liquor outlets do not sell alcohol to minors or any other consumers that are barred from purchasing it. As a result, the function that the police force plays in maintaining compliance with national legislation regarding the sale of alcohol is quite important.

Together, law enforcement and the judicial system work to uphold the rule of law and protect the constitution by ensuring that justice is carried out in a manner that is prompt, impartial, easily accessible, and accountable (Njenga, 2015). In doing so, they defend the rule of law and protect the constitution. The court is accountable for keeping the legislation that regulates the sale of alcoholic beverages within the several counties up to date. This method is utilized by the judicial system to ensure that prohibitionist rules and regulations are followed to the letter. In addition, the controlling of the manufacturing, distribution, and retail sale of alcoholic beverages is a collaborative effort between the county's law enforcement agencies, the leaders of the municipalities, and the residents of the county. According to Lenket et al. (2014), communities have a significant part to play in administrative tasks because of the access they have to first-hand knowledge. The natives of a town are the best sources of information regarding the various workshops and drinking sites located there. In collaboration with city hall and the police department, the county government may exercise stringent control over the distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages.

2.3.4 Conformity with policies Requirements and regulation of illicit brews trade

It is the legal responsibility of the product's manufacturer as well as the importer to ensure that the product complies with all applicable safety standards. Standardization is essential to the processes of manufacturing, product design, testing, ensuring that products are safe, and determining whether or not they comply with rules. Tukes (2016) defines standards as "normative documents designed and drafted by a recognized body or organization to provide

guidelines for practices." This definition describes standards as "normative documents designed and drafted by a recognized body or organization." The recommendations contained in the guidelines are meant to be implemented whenever it is practical to do so. As a result, the manufacturer is responsible for ensuring that all of their products and services, at each stage of production, comply with all of the relevant laws and requirements. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) asserts that submitting to a conformity assessment results in a number of beneficial outcomes. These outcomes include increasing product and service confidence among stakeholders (including consumers), providing a competitive edge for businesses, and assisting regulators in enforcing health, environmental, and safety standards. In addition, the ISO claims that submitting to a conformity assessment results in a number of other positive outcomes. The ability of authorities to evaluate the safety of products and services in compliance with the law is made possible by standards, which is a significant benefit. By guaranteeing that goods and services are safe and compatible with one another, as well as safeguarding the environment and customers, standards benefit both local and international business. The Kenyan government established the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) as the statutory organization responsible for regulating the safety and quality of imported goods, protecting Kenyan enterprises from unfair competition, and ensuring that indigenous manufacturers adhere to all relevant standards. KEBS was given the mandate to ensure that all indigenous manufacturers adhere to all applicable standards.

In order to achieve this objective, the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act of 2010 enacted punishments for breaching the rules that control the manufacture, distribution, sale, and importation of alcoholic beverages in Kenya. It is against the law to produce, market, or transport any alcoholic beverage that violates the terms of this Act. It is also against the law to possess any beverage that falls within this category. It is the responsibility of the government authorities in Meru County to monitor and ensure compliance with this Act on

the part of local manufacturers and marketers of alcohol. In order to maintain compliance with ISO 9001, daily tests of products and services to ensure that they correspond to specifications must be carried out. Testing and inspection are two methods that can be used to identify product qualities and whether or not they comply with rules. According to Kamau (2014), the County Government of Meru enacted the Meru Drinks Control Act of 2014 in order to ensure consumers' well-being throughout the alcohol supply chain. Because of this rule, it is against the law for producers and distributors to sell alcohol without first acquiring a license from the County Government. This license can be acquired by first obtaining a license from NACADA. In addition, according to the Alcohol Drinks Control Act of 2010, it should be made it illegal for any anyone to sell alcoholic beverages without first obtaining the necessary authorization. In addition, the sale of alcoholic beverages is restricted to businesses who have been granted permission to do so. By awarding permits and developing amicable partnerships with authorities and the community, county government agencies in Meru County have contributed to ensuring compliance with legislation relating to the control of alcohol sales. This has helped to assure compliance with the regulations.

Furthermore, according to the Alcohol Drinks Control Act that was passed in 2010, manufacturers of spirituous liquor such as chang'aa are permitted to do so; nevertheless, they are required to conform to the rules and requirements that are outlined in the legislation. Prior to the passage of this Act, a large number of people were engaged in the production and selling of traditional liquors, some of which had the same terrible effects as their second-generation equivalents. This Act will not apply to these activities. They are permitted to continue activities as long as they are in compliance with the Act and get permissions from the organizations that are responsible for licensing. This happens after rituals and conflicts between different industries and different government bodies. According to Muriuki (2016), for instance, chiefs in Laikipia west were threatened with murder since the crackdown on

illegal brews was cutting into their earnings. This was due to the fact that the chiefs' revenue was being cut as a result of the crackdown.

In addition, the authorities of the local government assure control of the alcohol trade by imposing penalties and fines for those who breach the standards of the liquor legislation. Those who violate the Alcohol Drinks Control Act of 2010 risk either a minimum fine of two million shillings or a maximum prison sentence of five years, or both (Achieng, 2013). The making of alcoholic beverages, their distribution, and their retail sale are all subject to the constraints of this regulation. According to the Daily Nation (Munene, 2013), the NACADA provides public health authorities and law enforcement with the authority to fine violators Kshs 10 million or put them to jail for five years for the production of illegal beers. In addition, the NACADA allows public health authorities the jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the violation. Those who disobey this directive, including proprietors of illicit breweries and distributors of their products, will be liable to severe consequences. NACADA and law enforcement have organized a crackdown on unlawful sales of alcohol as a response to the introduction of the Meru Drinks Control Act of 2014 in 2014.

2.3.5 Socio Cultural Factors and regulation of illicit brews trade

Sociocultural factors have been recognized for a long time as major predictors of alcohol consumption habits, despite the fact that these factors cut across racial and ethnic lines. According to Sudhinaraset, Wiggleworth, and Tekeuchi (2016), there are known to be considerable variations in these characteristics not only across continents and nations but even within local groups.

Alcohol use may be considered a cultural norm or even a virtue in some countries, whereas other communities either frown upon or outright ban the practice of drinking alcohol. The cultural norms that govern alcohol use are multifaceted and include considerations of the type

of beverage consumed, the frequency and quantity of consumption, special rituals or ceremonies involving alcohol, roles assigned to alcohol within the society, as well as age, gender, location, and timing of consumption (Mandelbaum, 1965). These factors are all taken into account when determining cultural norms regarding alcohol use.

According to Savic et al. (2016), individual and community drinking habits are frequently shaped not just by global and national legislative measures aimed at regulating the production and consumption of alcohol, but also by country-specific cultural values and practices. The regulation of alcohol is complicated by the interplay between statutory requirements and cultural norms, which results in a landscape that is multifaceted and frequently fraught with tension.

One instructive illustration can be found in Nigeria, which is characterized by the pervasive presence of alcohol in both religious and communal settings. Dumbili (2013) investigated the numerous ways in which alcohol is utilized throughout a number of Nigerian civilizations, which led to the discovery of a diverse range of practices, rituals, and beliefs.

Alcohol is more than just a drink in a lot of different cultures in Nigeria; it plays an important role in social cohesiveness and is a symbolic component in a lot of different rituals and festivities. For example, it is common practice to anticipate that adult males will indulge in drinking, while younger people will be in charge of supplying them. This action goes beyond merely consuming something and becomes a rite of passage that signals respect and societal roles.

Another noteworthy cultural norm is the consumption of alcohol in topics pertaining to matrimony. In many communities, the payment for the bride must include a certain amount of alcohol as a sign of mutual consent and solidarity between the families involved. The fact that it is consumed during key life events such as cultural festivals, chieftaincy enthronements,

infant dedications, and even funerals further emphasizes its embeddedness in the social fabric (Dumbili, 2013).

Alcohol plays intricate functions within different cultural contexts, which presents a dilemma for policymakers that want to limit consumption of alcohol because of this. According to Monaco et al. (2020), the combination of cultural practices and legal regulations can result in friction and complications, particularly when seeking to impose universal policies that may not correspond with the varied cultural values and beliefs of different groups of people.

Although the information presented here has focused mostly on the situation in Nigeria, similar issues are probably present in other nations with diverse cultural traditions toward alcohol, such as Kenya. This background will be investigated as part of the current project, with the goal of gaining potentially novel insights into the ways in which socio-cultural factors impact drinking behaviors in various countries.

In conclusion, a nuanced and culturally sensitive approach is required in order to grasp the complex web of sociocultural influences that influence alcohol intake. Policymakers and scholars need to deal with these complicated realities, realizing that plans to regulate alcohol must account for the rich tapestry of cultural norms and values that varies greatly between various countries. This is a requirement for any strategy to be effective.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The building of the conceptual framework was concentrated on the interaction between the duties of county government entities and the control of illegal beer trade inside the county. This was done in order to better understand the nature of the problem. This conceptual framework was a helpful tool that was utilized for illuminating concepts, determining which factors were dependent and which were independent, and providing a logical and organized explanation of the ideas at hand.

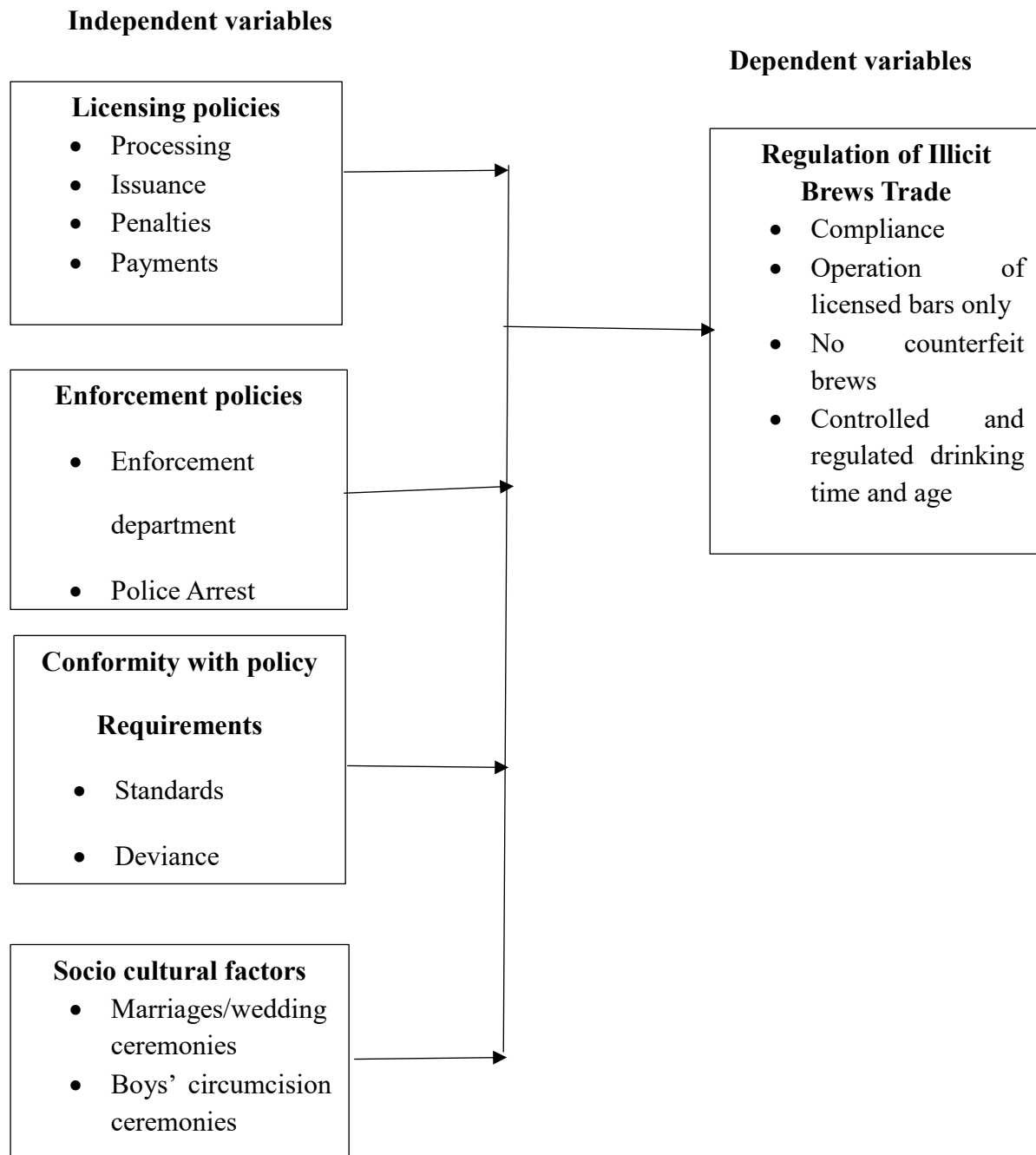


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2023)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methods used to carry out the study are described in this section. Information on the study's methodology, its data collection methods, and the analysis that followed are all included.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive research strategy was used for this investigation. Kombo and Tromp (2006), who advocate for a descriptive research design when the goal is to provide a detailed description of a phenomenon, lend credence to this option. The survey method used in this study was ideal for collecting and assessing participants' thoughts and feelings on the topic of the elements that contribute to the legalization of illegal brew trade in Meru County.

3.3 Location of the study

All of the fieldwork for this study took place in Meru County. Data on alcohol consumption in the Mount Kenya area collected by NACADA informed this choice. According to the statistics presented, consumption in Meru County is at a whopping 75.4% as of 2010 (NACADA, 2022).

3.4 Target Population

The focus of this research was on the booze merchants operating in Meru County. These merchants were part of the intended audience. There are 349 alcoholic beverage merchants in Meru County. These businesspeople can be found in any one of the county's 38 major cities. According to NACADA's data from 2022, the primary focus was on sub-counties with a high incidence of the alcohol trade.

Table 1 Target population for the study

Sub county	Number of urban centers	Alcohol traders
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Imenti South	9	93
Imenti Central	17	90
Imenti North	12	166
Total	38	349

Source: Meru County development integrated plan 2018 - 2022

3.6 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

When the number of people in the research population is less than 10,000, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommend using a sample size of 10% to 30% in order to provide an accurate picture of the whole. Since this study only needs a representative sample of the population, a 10% cutoff is appropriate. Accordingly, a sample size of 35 was deemed sufficient for analysis, given a total population of 349 alcohol traders.

A multistage cluster sampling strategy will be used for this study's technique. It's possible that there isn't a current, up-to-date list or sampling frame of the full population. However, clusters can be more readily defined and identified, even in the absence of a comprehensive population list. This requires determining which municipalities fall under each of the three wards, with the goal of picking two municipalities from the wards that have a greater number of alcohol outlets and one municipality from the wards that have a lesser number of outlets. The selected communities, in particular, are well-known in the alcoholic beverage industry. Five municipalities will be chosen at random from the three areas defined by this strategy.

Snowball methods will be used to attract alcohol merchants to take part in the study. The sample will consist of 35 alcohol vendors, with this method allowing for the identification of 7 from each of the selected cities.

Interviewees will consist of leaders in the field of alcohol control from a variety of relevant organizations. A county licensing committee member, a subcounty commissioner, two chiefs, four assistant chiefs, and two police officers from the study area were interviewed. Information from the Meru County Commissioner's office for the year 2022 will be used to

make this decision. There will be a total of 35 respondents, including both alcohol merchants and key informants.

Table 2 Sample size

Sub county	Number of urban centres	Town sampled	No. of alcohol traders for questionnaire	No. of key informants for interview
Imenti South	9	2	7	14
Imenti Central	17	1	7	7
Imenti North	12	2	7	14
Total	38		35	A member of county licensing committee, sub county commissioner, 2chiefs, 4Assistant chiefs, 2 police officers =10

Source: Researcher (2023)

3.7 Research Instrumentation

Two primary research instruments—interview guides and questionnaires—will be used throughout data collecting. The goals of the research and the type of information being gathered should inform the choice of instrument. Interviews and questionnaires work well because they allow respondents to feel at ease and provide honest answers. Participants will have the freedom to share their honest opinions because these tools are self-reported.

The questionnaires and interview schedules will be carefully crafted to meet the research objectives and collect all the necessary data for analysis. This method guarantees clear communication among participants and methodical, well-organized data collecting.

Researchers can encourage a more open and honest flow of information by using self-administered instruments, which allow participants to interact with the study at their own pace and in their own language. Standardized replies that are easily quantifiable and

interpretable are produced by this method, thereby enhancing its usefulness in data gathering and analysis.

Selecting well-designed interview guides and questionnaires as research instruments will improve data quality, encourage participation, and advance the study's goals.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Eliminating both systematic and content errors is essential to guaranteeing the questionnaire's validity. We shall carefully evaluate construct validity by comparing the conceptualization of the variables to the questions. Each question will be checked to make sure it is pertinent to the appropriate feature of the related variable, keeping everything uniform within the same framework.

The questionnaire will be pretested to ensure its accuracy before being used on a larger scale.

The questionnaire will be distributed in a city within the study area that will not be included in the final sample. Ten participants will be chosen to reflect the whole range of participants in the study in this preliminary assessment.

The pretest is used to assess the questionnaire's readability, logic, and efficacy. During this stage, respondents provide feedback that is used to identify questions that respondents find unclear or ambiguous. This information is then used to make any necessary changes to the instrument.

The research team can make the questionnaire more effective at collecting the desired data by subjecting it to rigorous pre-testing procedures. This iterative process ensures that the questionnaire is tailored for validity, which in turn strengthens the reliability and validity of the study's results.

3.7 Data collection Procedures

The researcher will take all precautions before beginning data collecting to guarantee ethical conduct and smooth study execution. The university's Directorate of Graduate Studies will be

contacted to request a letter of introduction. The National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) research permit application process will be aided by this letter. The researcher cannot ask the Meru County commissioner for authorization to perform the study without this approval. After getting approval from the county commissioner, the researcher will go to the office of the Imenti South Sub County Commissioner to get a second letter that will allow the researcher to communicate with the respondents.

Drop-and-pick questionnaire administration supported by study assistants will be used to collect data from alcohol distributors. This strategy requires a future delivery and collection of the equipment. Meanwhile, the researcher will schedule interviews with important informants in advance to avoid any hiccups in communication or scheduling.

By taking such painstaking precautions, we can be sure that our data collecting will be performed in a responsible and lawful manner. Such careful preparation and protocol adherence contribute to the validity and reliability of the study.

3.8 Data analysis

The data will be rigorously categorized into overarching themes that correspond to the study's goals. Quantitative and qualitative information will be gathered from this investigation.

Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the quantitative data. Pie charts, tables, and bar graphs will be used to properly illustrate the findings. These visuals will provide a brief description of the quantitative findings, making them much simpler to grasp and comprehend.

We shall also use inferential statistics. Statistical methods including t-tests, chi-square tests, and regression analysis will be used to investigate the results and uncover hidden patterns and correlations.

However, the qualitative data will be analyzed using a theme framework. This requires carefully reading and investigating the responses given by the respondents. Themes, pattern-

analysis resources, and new understandings will emerge from this process. Next, we'll have a more organized discussion of the qualitative findings, illuminating the nuanced perspectives and personal experiences of the respondents.

The purpose of this study is to shed light on the topic at hand from every angle possible, which is why a mixed-methods strategy was adopted, using both quantitative and qualitative data. The depth and complexity of the findings are enhanced by the methodical investigation and presentation of both forms of data.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Human participants in research must be treated with respect at all times, and researchers must abide by a code of ethics to ensure their safety and anonymity. Among other ethical issues, the study will protect the privacy of its participants. All information gathered will be kept secret in an effort to protect people's privacy. Before starting the study, the researcher will also try to get green lights from Mount Kenya University, NACOSTI, County offices, and the respondents themselves. No identifying information about the respondents will be collected or used in any way. The use of informed consent also ensures that study participants are aware of their rights.

CHAPTER FOUR CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

Findings, analysis, and debate are all presented in this chapter in light of the study's aims. Data is displayed visually in the form of charts, tables, and diagrams. The chapter is broken up into sections based on questions asked throughout the research.

4.2 Rate of Response

Table 3 Rate of Response

Response	Frequency	Percent
Returned	32	91.4%
Unreturned	3	8.6%
Total	35	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Thirty-five people met the criteria for inclusion in the study, and questionnaires were sent out to them. As can be seen in the table, however, only 32 of these surveys were actually returned for analysis. The resulting 91.4% response rate is consistent with the recommendation of Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) that a 75% response rate is sufficient for research.

4.3 Reliability Test

Mitunguu town, which was not included in the study's sample, was used for preliminary testing.

Table 4: Reliability of the research instrument

Variable	α =Alpha	Comment
Licensing policies	0.798	Reliable
Enforcement policies	0.842	Reliable
Conformity with requirements	0.783	Reliable

Social cultural factors	0.812	Reliable
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Source: Researcher (2023)

Cronbach's Alpha for licensing policies was 0.798, for enforcement policies it was 0.842, for conformity it was 0.783, and for social and cultural aspects it was 0.812. The Cronbach's Alpha for each of these measures was greater than 0.7, indicating that the research instrument was dependable.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics

Residents of Meru County took part in the study. A variety of descriptions of the study's respondents are provided below.

4.3.1 Respondents Gender

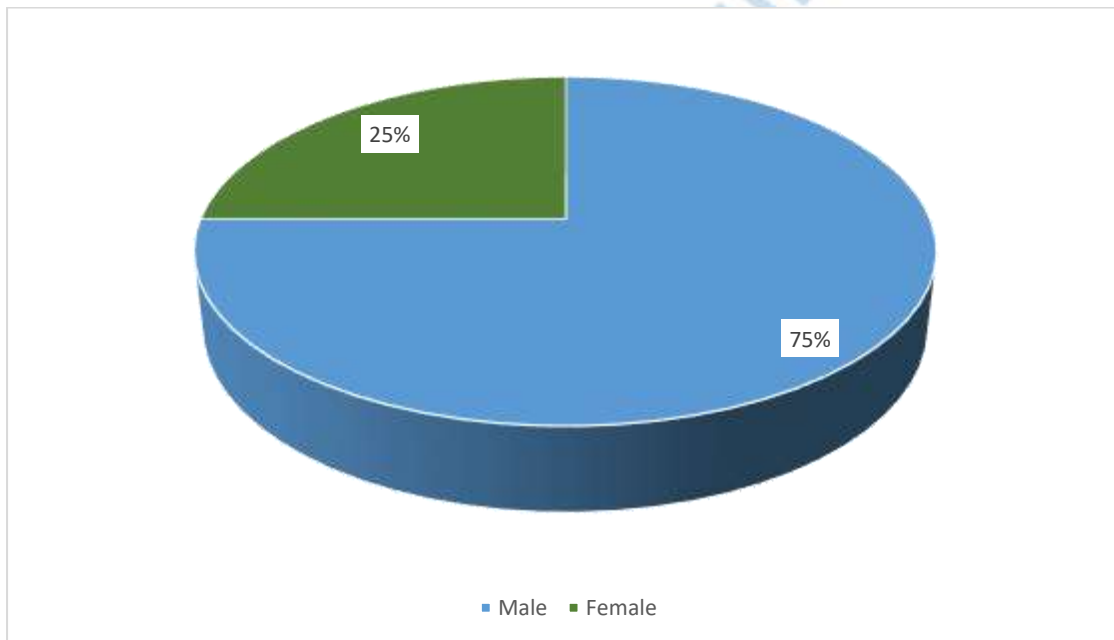


Figure 2: Respondents Gender

Source: Researcher (2023)

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of the sample by gender. According to the statistics, 75% of the contributors were male and 25% were female. As a result, it is clear that people of both sexes in Meru County are familiar with the policies and laws that govern the sale of alcoholic beverages. This finding shows that men and women are affected differently by these rules,

highlighting the value of including their perspectives in the study. There is no indication that the study's findings favor one gender over the other. These results are consistent with the studies of Romito and Grassi (2007), who believe that alcohol has a negative effect on both men and women.

4.3.2 Age of respondents

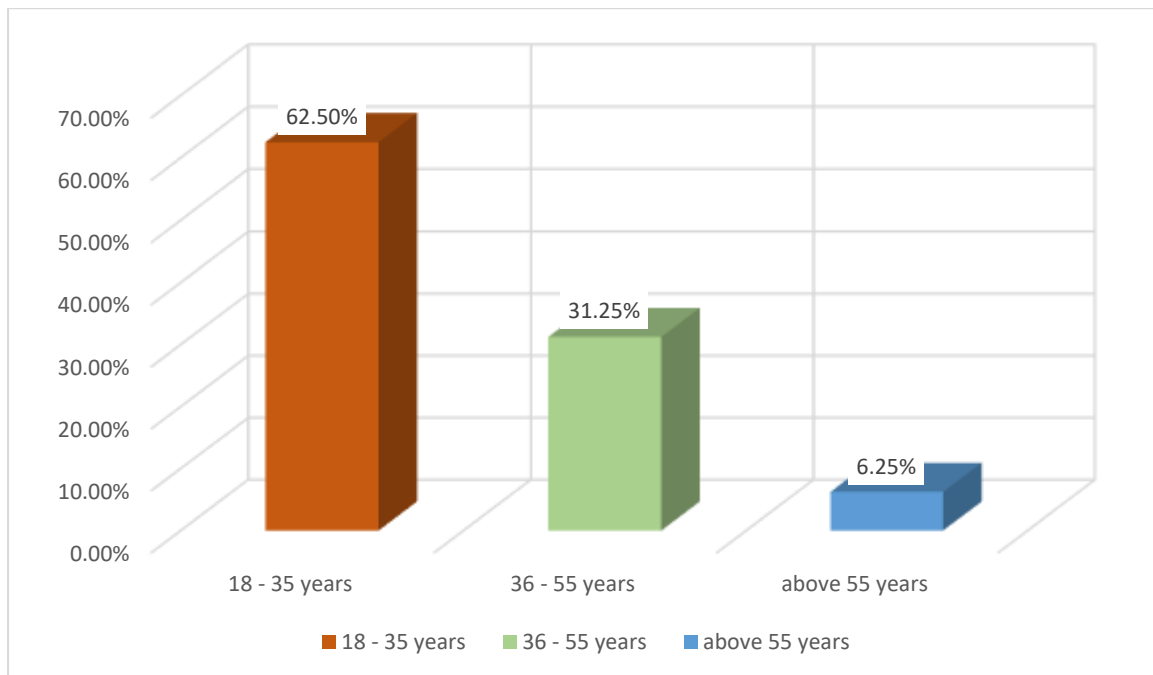


Figure 3: Age of Respondents

Source: Researcher (2023)

Age distribution information is shown in Figure 3. The graph shows that 31.25 percent were between the ages of 36 and 55, 6.25 percent were 55 and older, and 62.5 percent were in the 18-35 age bracket. According to the results, nearly two-thirds of the respondents (62.5% to be exact) were young adults (between the ages of 18 and 35). This suggests that the population of Meru County between the ages of 18 and 35 would be the demographic most affected by any policy regulations controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages. It should be noted, however, that the research of Piacentini and Banister (2009) runs counter to these conclusions by showing that alcohol use is mostly a question of individual choice and that people of any age can engage in it, especially in the absence of rigorous usage limits.

4.3.3 Respondents marital status

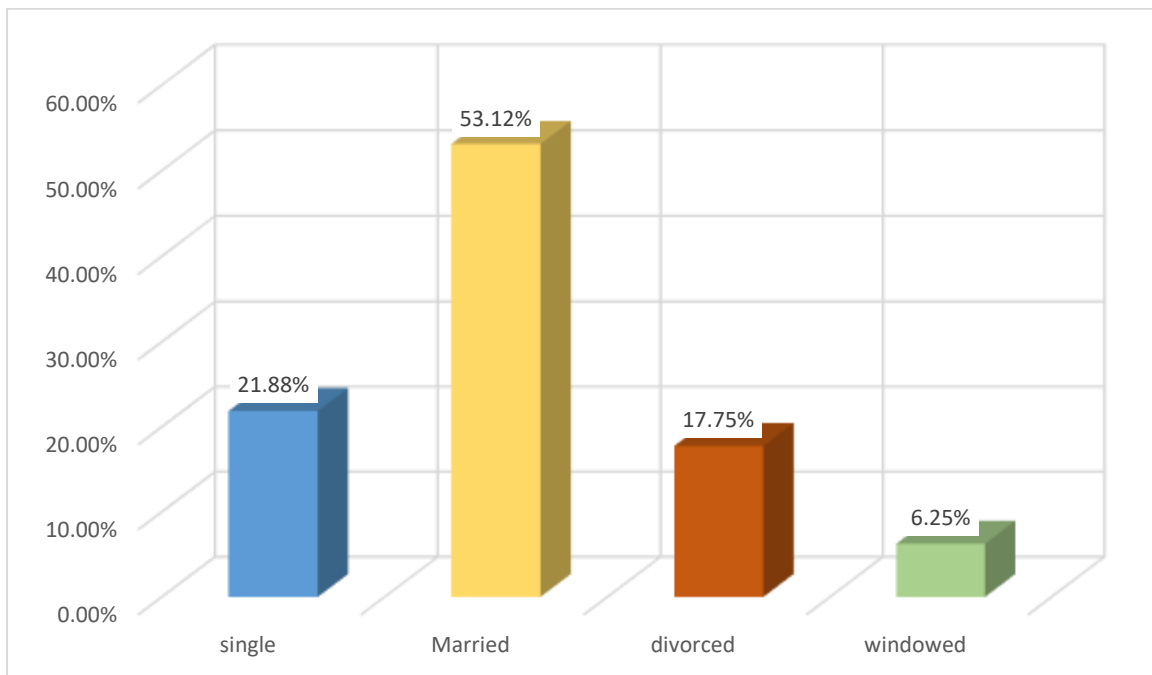


Figure 4: Respondents marital status

Source: Researcher (2023)

It is clear from the data shown in Figure 4 that 53.13 percent of the participants were married and had children. In addition, 21.88 percent were never married, 18.75 percent were divorced, and 6.25 percent were widowed. The majority of respondents (53.13%) are married, demonstrating a dedication to family life, as shown by these data. There appears to be a large number of people who are either never married or in unstable relationships due to alcohol use, as suggested by the data. Consistent with previous research, this study highlights the impact of alcohol consumption and abstinence on family relations. This correlation highlights the significance of alcohol intake in causing tensions, which in turn leads to ineffective communication between partners and carelessness inside the home.

4.3.4 Respondents Religion

Table 5: Respondents Religion

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Christian	27	84.4
	Others	5	15.6
	Total	32	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

The respondents' religious identifications are listed in Table 5. According to the data, 84.4% of respondents considered themselves Christians, with the remaining 15.6% belonging to various Christian groups. According to the statistics, Christians make up the largest religious group in Meru County, giving them potential sway over alcohol policymaking and enforcement. These results are consistent with those of a 2013 study by Cleveland et al., which also highlighted the influence of religion on people's actions and, in particular, their alcohol use habits, given that some religions sanction alcohol while others have strict restrictions.

4.3.5 Level of education

The respondents were requested to indicate their highest level of education, Table illustrates the educational backgrounds of the participants.

Table 6 Level of education

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Primary education	11	34.4
	Secondary education	15	46.9
	College education	4	12.5
	University education	2	6.3
	Total	32	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 6 shows that 46.9% of respondents had completed secondary school, whereas 34.4% had completed only primary school. Another 12.5 percent had attended college, and 6.3

percent had graduated from college or university. Assuming a high level of education among the participants, this indicates familiarity with the rules governing the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County. These findings are consistent with the claim made by Elder et al. (2002) that respondents with greater experience in the subject area are more likely to provide thorough answers that help answer research questions. Therefore, the majority of respondents' literate status allowed for efficient responses to the study's questions.

4.3.6 Occupation

The study sought to establish the respondent's occupation status. The graph in Figure 5 provides insights into the respondents' occupational status.

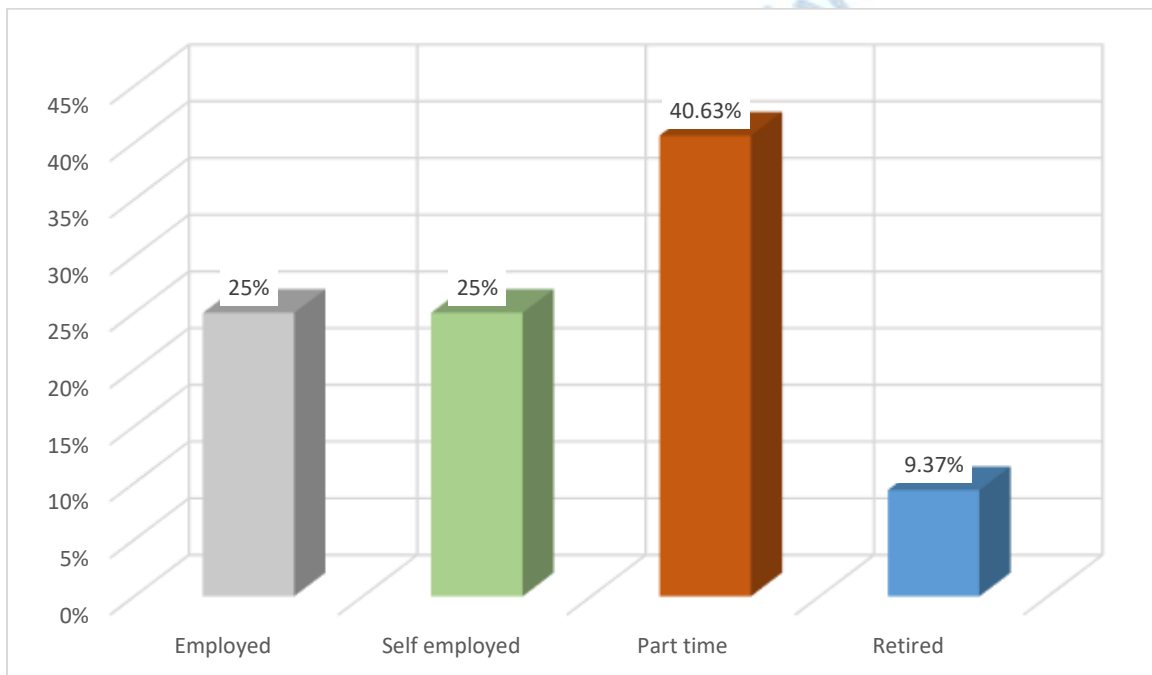


Figure 5: Respondents Occupation

Source: Researcher (2023)

Figure 5 depicts the percentage of respondents who were working part-time. This percentage was relatively high at 40.63 percent. In addition, we found that 25% of the respondents were self-employed, while another 25% were worked full-time. Only 9.375% of the workforce was currently comprised of retirees. These results show that most respondents were now working, giving them direct exposure to the effects of countywide alcohol commerce and policy

regulations. These findings corroborate those of a 2010 study conducted by Rosenquist et al., which hypothesized that a person's employment situation would have an impact on their alcohol consumption. Working people have more disposable cash, which may lead to more alcohol consumption, whereas the unemployed and those with lower incomes are more likely to drink cheap, locally produced alcohol.

4.3.7 Respondents Monthly Income

The study sought to establish respondent's monthly income, the table 7 shows responses.

Table 7: Respondent's Monthly Income

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Less than Ksh 15,000	15	46.9
	Ksh 15,000-30,000	9	28.1
	Ksh 30,000-50,000	4	12.5
	Above 50,000	4	12.5
Total		32	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 7 shows that over half (46.9%) of respondents had monthly incomes of Ksh. 15,000 or less, that nearly a third (28.1%) had monthly incomes of Ksh. 15,000 to Ksh.30,000, and that nearly a quarter (25%) had monthly incomes of Ksh. Based on the statistics, it appears that most respondents make more than Ksh 15,000 per month, making them able to cover their monthly alcohol costs. Notably, there was greater variation in alcohol intake among people with lower salaries than among those with higher incomes. Consistent with the findings of Grittner et al. (2013), who found that income level was correlated with alcohol intake, we find the following. Thus, the data shows that higher income earners are more likely to partake in alcoholic beverages, most likely because they have more money to spend.

4.3.8 Respondents alcohol consumption profile

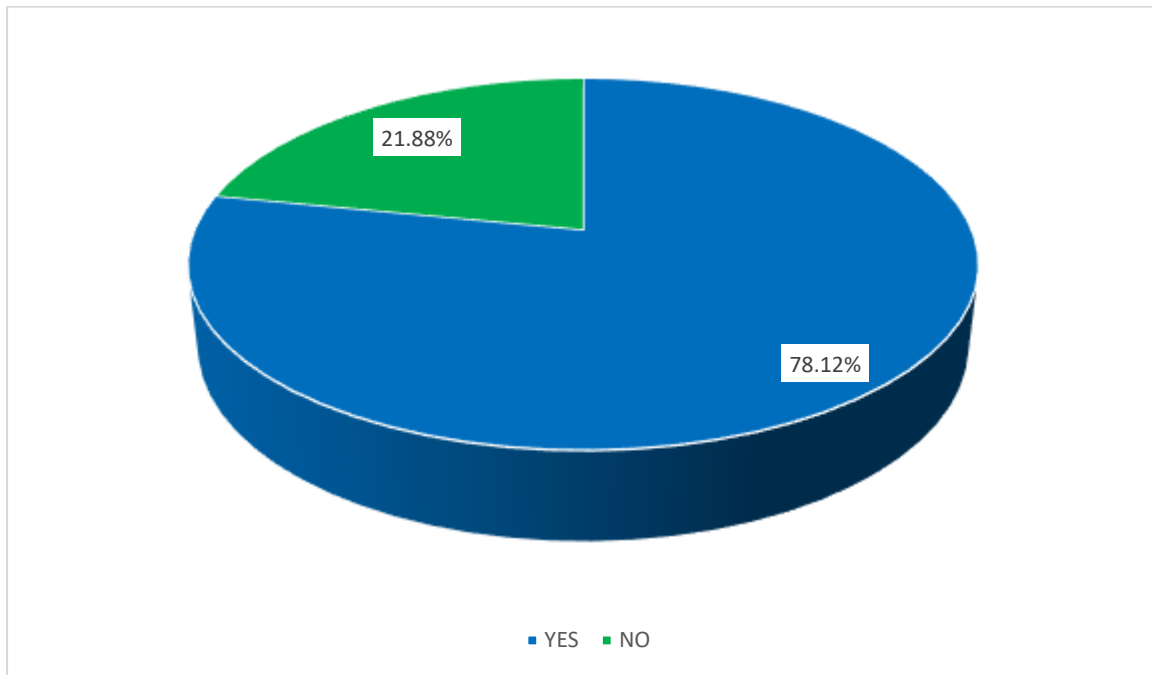


Figure 6: Respondents alcohol consumption profile

Source: Researcher (2023)

The respondents' consumption patterns are depicted in the accompanying pie chart. The statistics showed that 78.12% of respondents said they drank alcohol, while 21.8% denied it. These results suggest that many of the respondents drink alcohol and are conversant with the effects of policy regulations on the alcohol trade in Meru County. The other 21.88 percent of the population does not drink, but they are aware of how these rules affect the alcohol industry in their county.

4.3.9 Location of alcohol intake

The study sought to establish the various places where respondents in the study consume alcohol. The responses were as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Location of alcohol intake

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Bars	20	62.5
	Village alcohol producers	6	18.8

Others	6	18.8
Total	32	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 8 shows that 62.5% of respondents said they drank at bars, while 18.8% said they bought their alcohol from alcohol companies in small towns, and another 18.8% said they got it from unknown sources. These findings point to two likely hubs for alcoholic beverage use in Meru County: bars and sites where locally produced alcohol is sold. The easy access to such businesses is probably a factor in the high rates of alcohol consumption in the area. This research agrees with that of Gurubasic et al. (2012), who looked into the correlation between drinking and being physically close to bars and restaurants. According to research by Gurubasic et al., people who live in neighborhoods with a lot of pubs and breweries are more likely to drink frequently than those who do not. This correlation further supports the idea that people who live in close proximity to breweries and bars are more likely to be heavy drinkers and to have a firm grasp of the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages.

4.3.10 Frequency of alcohol consumption

The participants were requested to indicate their frequency of consuming alcohol, the results were as indicated in the figure 7.

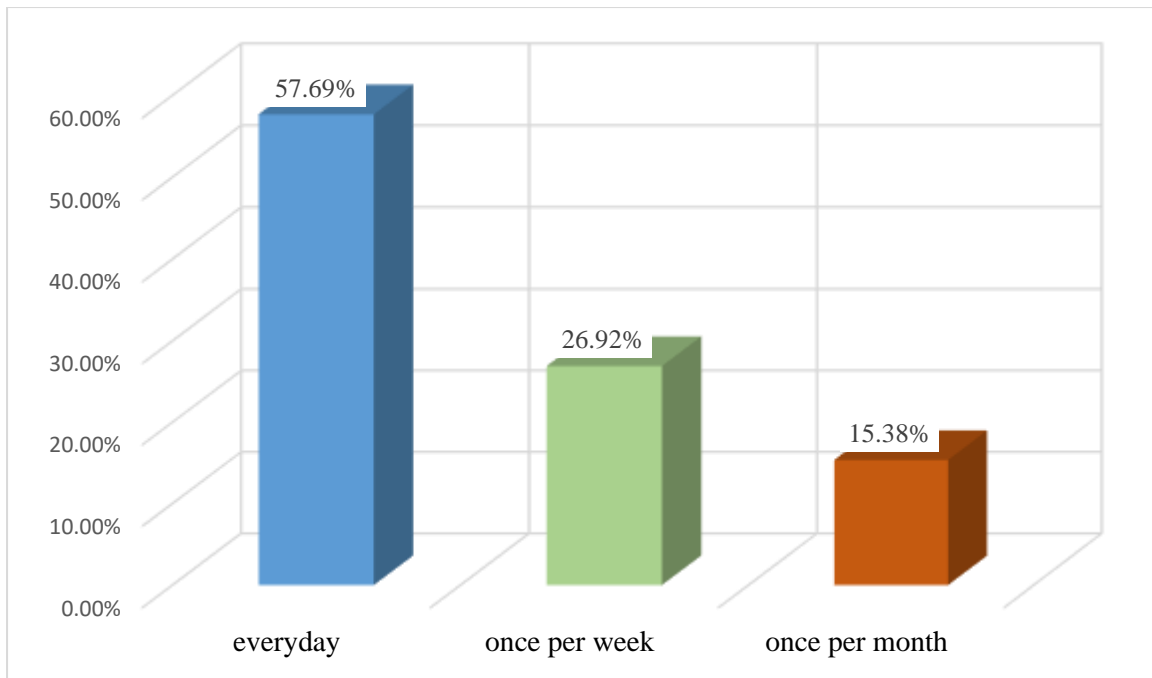


Figure 7: Frequency of alcohol consumption

Source: Researcher (2023)

According to the results, roughly 57.69% of people who took the survey said they agree with drinking alcohol every day. About 29% of respondents said they drank alcohol at least once each week, while another 15% said they did so at least once per month. These findings indicate that respondents are aware of the effects of policy regulations on the alcohol business, suggesting that alcohol usage is a socially accepted norm. Regular alcohol drinking has certainly contributed to their extensive understanding of the many facets of alcoholic beverage control legislation.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents analysis of the variables of the study which include licensing regulations, enforcement regulations and conformity with requirements.

4.4.1 Licensing Policies on Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade

The study first objective sought to examine the effect of licensing policies on regulation of illicit brews trade in Meru County. The responses were as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Licensing Policies

Statements	N	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Regulations of alcohol trade works properly	32	28.1	40.6	12.5	18.8	0.0	3.7	1.198
Majority of liquor outlets are licensed	32	21.9	37.5	21.9	21.9	15.6	3.6	1.103
County government agencies are effective in licensing of liquor industry.	32	18.8	25.0	31.3	15.6	15.6	3.3	1.224
Issuing of licenses limits has helped as far as regulation of alcohol trade is concerned.	32	21.9	43.8	28.1	6.3	0.0	3.8	.859
County government agencies have ensured fairness in administration of liquor licenses.	32	6.3	31.3	15.6	34.4	12.5	3.3	1.121
There is effectiveness in Licensing process	32	18.8	40.6	18.8	15.6	6.3	3.5	1.164
Licensing has reduced manufacturing, distribution, and sale of alcohol trade	32	12.5	25.0	34.4	18.8	9.5	3.12	1.157
Enactment of alcohol licensing laws has reduced number of illicit brews	32	18.8	50	12.5	12.5	6.3	3.6	1.129

Penalties helps to regulate alcohol trade	32	37.5	28.1	12.5	3.1	3.6	1.045
Majority of public are aware of licensing policies	32	31.3	9.4	3.1	0.0	4.4	.798
Valid N (listwise)	32						

Source: Researcher (2023)

The results of a study of how well state and local laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages mesh are summarized in Table 9. The purpose of the research was to determine if the policies governing the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County were being followed. Results show that a sizable percentage of respondents (40.6%) agree with this statement, with 28.1%) expressing strong agreement that restrictions governing the alcohol trade are effective. However, 12.5 percent of respondents were agnostic, and 18.8 percent thought these rules were ineffective. With a mean score of 3.7188 and a standard deviation of 1.19770, the data shows that 68.7% of respondents believe that alcohol trade regulations are having the desired effect. While 87.5% of respondents said that alcohol consumption should be regulated, 12.5% were unsure. This suggests that more research is needed to guarantee that policies are being implemented effectively. Moore et al.'s (2010) findings, which highlight the central importance of the licensing system in regulating alcohol commerce and increasing the capacity of regulatory agencies, are consistent with these findings.

This study's focus on illuminating whether or not licensing requirements are being followed in Meru County made it especially important to investigate whether or not the vast majority of local liquor stores carry current licenses. The majority of respondents (59.4%) believed that most liquor stores have licenses, while 21.9% were unsure. Also, just 81.3% of people agreed that most liquor stores carry licenses. These results indicate that most people in Meru

County are aware of the licensing requirements, and that the majority of liquor stores in the county are licensed.

The fact that 21.9% of respondents were ambivalent about the licensed status of liquor outlets suggests that some people in Meru County may be unaware of the rules governing such businesses. The data shows a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.103, further supporting this observation. These results are in line with those found by Chikritzhs et al. (2007), who also found that the vast majority of alcohol merchants choose to obtain licenses in order to stay on the right side of the law and stop the spread of potentially hazardous goods.

Backed up by interview with member of county alcohol licensing committee on alcohol trade licensing he noted that, *“Upon the grant of a licence through payment of prescribed fee, then the alcohol trade is deemed to be operating legally”*. This therefore, shows that licensing has been effective in Meru County since most of the alcohol outlets are licensed.

Regarding the efficiency of county government departments in charge of alcohol licensing. The results showed that 43.8% of respondents thought that county government authorities are effective in controlling the alcohol sector, while 31.3% were unsure and 25% strongly disapproved. With a mean value of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 1.223, most respondents are unsure of how efficient county government agencies are in liquor licensing. Case in point: the Oregon Liquor Commission (OLCC) has run into problems trying to control alcohol sales and usage (Oregon, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial for organizations in Meru County to inspire trust in their capacity to regulate the booze business.

In reference to how restricting licenses affects efforts to control the sale of alcoholic beverages. This data is vital because it reveals how effective the licensing scheme for controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County has been. According to the numbers, a sizable minority (65.7%) agrees with the statement that license restrictions have

been successful in controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages. About 28.1% were undecided, while 6.3% were against the view that licensing restrictions aid in effective management of the alcohol sector. With a mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 0.859, the results show that licenses have been an effective instrument in regulating the alcohol trade. These results are consistent with those of Chikritzhs et al. (2007), who found that licensing helps ensure that enterprises follow the rules. Therefore, it is evident that licensing has played a pivotal part in Meru County's efforts to regulate the sale of alcoholic beverages.

To what extent departments of county governments have ensured that liquor licenses are distributed fairly. The survey's primary goal was to gauge how well respondents understood the county government's attempts to ensure fairness in this procedure. The results showed that 37.6% of respondents felt county government agencies were fair in their administration of liquor licenses, whereas 34.4% felt neither positive nor negative and 28.1% were strongly opposed. With a mean score of 3.30, it's not evident that everyone gets treated fairly. The standard deviation for this degree of uncertainty was 1.121. In addition, previous studies by Partanem (2009) have emphasized corruption as a factor impeding the efficacy and fairness of policies. This indicates that the integrity of the Meru County government's alcohol policy laws may be at risk due to corruption concerns.

The research looked at how well the licensing system in Meru County worked. Based on the results, we know that 59.4% of respondents thought the licensing procedure was effective, whereas 21.9% thought otherwise. The effectiveness of the licensing system for the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County was demonstrated by the mean score of 3.5 and the standard deviation of 1.164. This effectiveness is vital for controlling the distribution of alcoholic beverages in the area.

These results align with a study conducted by Wagenaar et al. (2000), indicating public support for licensing policies. Proper implementation procedures were highlighted as

essential for effectiveness. Additionally, an interview with a chief in Nkuene ward supported the research findings. He mentioned instances “*there were cases where applicants were denied licenses due to non-compliance with health and safety regulations outlined in the alcohol control acts of 2010 and 2014*”. The study emphasized the importance of adhering strictly to the law as the foundation for the licensing process. Deviation from legal standards should never be tolerated to maintain the effectiveness of the licensing system.

On influence of licensing on alcohol manufacturing, distribution, and sales in Meru County. This data is essential for the research since it allows the researchers to evaluate the effects of licensing in the county. With a mean score of 3.1250, the majority of responders (34.4% of the total) took a neutral position. While 25% of respondents agreed that licensing had reduced alcohol-related behaviors, 12.5% strongly agreed, and 29.2% disagreed.

With a mean and standard deviation of 3.1250 and 1.1570 respectively, the results suggest that participants were unsure of how licensing will affect the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County. Njenga (2015) pointed out in his research that one goal of licensing is to reduce the number of pubs and liquor stores, which in turn increases transparency. However, the results of this study show that respondents are doubtful, which Lutta (2016) attributes to causes including inefficient implementation of licensing procedures and corruption.

When asking if illegal alcohol manufacturing has decreased since alcohol licensing rules were put into place. This data is essential for understanding whether or not alcohol licensing laws in Meru County have been successful in reducing the availability of illegal alcoholic beverages.

According to the data, the majority of respondents (60.8 percentage points), as evidenced by a mean score of 3.6250, agree that the introduction of alcohol licensing rules has led to a decrease of illicit brews in Meru County. Meanwhile, 18.8 percent of respondents did not feel

that alcohol licensing rules have helped reduce illegal breweries in the area and 12.2 percent were unsure.

Conclusions drawn from this research indicate that policies and regulations, such as the introduction of alcohol licensing legislation, have effectively contributed to the decrease in the production of illegal alcoholic beverages in Meru County. This is in line with the findings of a related study by Duailibi et al. in Brazil in 2010, which similarly highlighted the need for stringent legislation and policy to control the alcohol industry.

The success of alcohol control measures, however, goes beyond the mere implementation of stringent legislation. According to Partanen (1991), law enforcement credibility is directly related to how well alcohol is managed. He noted that, historically, corruption among law enforcers meant that even Moi's strict rules had little effect on reducing alcohol consumption. From this vantage point, it's clear that ethical and efficient enforcement is crucial to the success of any program aimed at reducing alcohol consumption.

This statement investigates whether or not penalties have a significant role in contributing to the control of alcohol trading in the region in response to the feedback about penalties and alcohol regulation in Meru County. According to the findings, 56.3% of respondents felt that sanctions play a substantial role in controlling alcohol trade, while 28.1% were neutral and 15.6% were opposed to this viewpoint. With a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.045, there is substantial evidence that sanctions aid in the control of the alcohol trade in Meru County. These results are in line with those of Rehmet et al. (2001), who studied the effect of penalty authority on the regulation of the alcohol trade and found that fines do have an important impact.

A member of the county licensing committee discussed the committee's efforts to regulate alcohol use, including the mandate that producers place warning labels on alcohol products. Furthermore, no licensed liquor stores may be located within 300 meters of any school

property. A 12-month prison sentence, a fine of Kshs 150,000 (about \$1,500), or both, may be imposed for selling alcohol to minors or indulging in other similar violations. High penalties have been set for vendors, customers, and brewers, and the authorities have limited the hours that establishments can be open. There is substantial evidence that criminal sanctions work to curb the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County. These results are supported by those of Duailibi et al. (2010), who found that reducing homicides and alcohol-related problems coincided with stricter fines and regulation of operating hours.

The purpose of this statement is to gauge the level of familiarity locals in Meru County have with relevant licensing rules. Overwhelmingly (87.6%), respondents felt that the majority of the public is aware of these rules (with an average score of 4.4). The percentage of respondents who did not provide an opinion ranged from 9.4 to 3.1%. The low standard deviation of 0.798 suggests that responses were rather consistent across the board, lending credence to the idea that the general public in Meru County is knowledgeable about the laws regulating the sale of alcoholic beverages. This view is supported by the findings of Munene (2018), who discovered that the licensing board for alcoholic beverages in Meru County had outlawed the production and trade of second-generation booze, making it mandatory for all local establishments to have proper permits. This demonstrates that many people in Meru County have a solid grasp of the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages.

4.4.2 Enforcement Policies and Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade

The second objective of the study sought to establish the effect of enforcement policies on regulation of illicit brews trade in Meru County. The responses are as shown in table 10.

Table 10: Enforcement Policies

Statements	N	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
Alcohol is sold at the right time and the	32	6.3	25.0	34.4	28.1	6.3	2.97	1.031

right persons.

Corruption has 32 18.8 37.5 21.9 18.8 3.1 3.5 1.107
undermined
enforcement role as
well as regulation
measures.

Severe punishments 32 18.8 25.0 25.0 21.9 18.8 3.2 1.263
for alcohol have
reduce sale and
distribution of alcohol
in Meru County.

Enforcement has 32 12.5 46.9 18.8 15.6 6.3 3.4 1.105
enhanced public
safety

Police arrests has 32 18.8 43.8 12.5 15.6 9.4 3.5 1.244
helped in regulation of
alcohol trade

There is public 32 6.3 15.6 31.3 28.1 18.8 2.6 1.157
participation in
enforcement of
alcohol policies

War on illicit brew is 32 25.0 31.5 25.0 15.6 3.1 3.6 1.132
still a big issue in
Meru County

There are enough 32 21.9 34.4 21.9 15.6 6.3 3.5 1.191
authorized personnel
for enforcement in the
county

Enforcement 32 28.1 46.9 15.6 9.4 0.0 3.9 .914
departments have
enhanced
accountability in
enforcement of

alcohol trade.

Valid N (listwise) 32

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 10 shows the responses concerning enforcement policies related to the sale of alcohol. This declaration was made to ascertain if alcoholic beverages were being sold legally and to the correct people. The results showed that 34.4 percent of respondents were unsure if the hours and demographics of alcohol sales were adequate or not. When asked whether they believe that alcohol sales are scheduled and targeted toward the correct individuals, the majority of respondents (34.4%) expressed their disagreement with this statement, while just 31.3% agreed. There are worries about the timing and clientele of alcohol sales, as indicated by a mean of 2.97 and a standard deviation of 1.031. Therefore, the findings point to failings on the part of authorities to control alcohol sales appropriately. In contrast to these results, a research by Duailibi (2010) indicated that limiting bar hours improved Brazil's ability to regulate its alcohol trade. Therefore, it is suggested that the alcohol regulating board in Meru County look into the potential causes of the county's problematic alcohol sales practices.

This comment is very important because it sheds light on whether corruption weakens the enforcement role and regulatory mechanisms in Meru County. According to the findings, over half of the respondents (56.3% to be exact) believe that corruption has negatively impacted enforcement and regulation in Meru County. Twenty-one percent of those polled took no view on the issue, while another twenty-one percent argued that corruption has not undermined enforcement or regulation. The mean score is 3.5, with a standard deviation of 1.107, indicating that respondents are unsure as to whether or not corruption has weakened the effectiveness of enforcement and regulation in Meru County's efforts to control the alcohol trade. These results are consistent with those of a study by Lutta (2016) that

highlighted the significant negative effects of corruption on alcohol trade regulation; this may be the case in Meru County as well.

Different viewpoints emerge from the data on how harsh penalties will affect alcohol sales and distribution in Meru County. To be more precise, 32.7% of respondents believed that moderate fines had successfully decreased alcohol sales and distribution in the area, while 31.3% disagreed. Only around a quarter of those polled had no opinion on the matter, but the remaining 43.8% were convinced that strict penalties for violating alcohol laws have reduced alcohol sales and distribution in Meru County. A mean score of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 1.263 suggest that respondents were somewhat indifferent as to whether or not harsh sanctions affect the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County. This suggests that the harsh penalties have not had an appreciable effect on the local alcoholic beverage market. But a 2013 study by Achieng provides a different viewpoint, showing that checkpoints as a regulated regime for alcohol sale among drivers have effectively reduced drunk driving incidents. This suggests that penalties, by establishing a fear of legal repercussions, may play a positive role in limiting the sale and distribution of alcohol.

Data reveals a variety of participant views about the significance of enforcement in improving public safety in Meru County. Sixty-one percent of respondents said that law enforcement had a positive impact on community safety. However, 21.9 percent of respondents disagreed that enforcement actions have improved public safety in the context of alcohol trade regulation in Meru County, while 18.8 percent took no view on the issue. With a mean score of 3.4 and a standard deviation of 1.105, respondents appear to be split on whether or not law enforcement has made a significant impact on public safety. The necessity for effective policy execution and public education is highlighted by this degree of ambiguity. Doherty and Roche's 2003 research supports the necessity of enforcement by claiming that

such policies have improved protection against assault, maintained cleanliness standards, lowered theft, and decreased domestic violence related to alcohol commerce.

In order to better understand the connection between alcohol trade restrictions and police arrests, this study gathered relevant replies. With 64.6% in agreement, 12.5% indifferent, and 25% disagreeing, police arrests helped regulate alcohol in Meru County. Supporting Munene's (2013) results on law enforcement's authority in controlling the alcohol trade, a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.244 indicated a potentially favorable impact. Public involvement in alcohol policy enforcement was also investigated. The survey found that 46.9% of respondents were opposed to public participation, 31.3% were unsure, and 21.9% were in agreement. With a mean of 2.6 and a standard deviation of 1.157, low levels of public participation may make it difficult to enforce laws. Lenk et al. (2014) stressed the significance of community involvement, asking Meru County to increase public involvement in order to effectively implement policies.

The effects of the conflict on illegal beer production were also analyzed in the study. The results showed that 56.3% of people think it's a big deal, 25% are unsure, and 18.7% are completely against it. The significance of the issue was underscored by the standard deviation of 1.132 and the mean of 3.6. The problem has been highlighted by Muriuki's (2016) research in other Kenyan counties, highlighting the necessity for increased actions against illicit brews in Meru County. The research also looked into the legitimate authorities responsible for enforcing the law. The survey found that only 21.9% of respondents felt there were sufficient workers on hand, while another 21.9% were unsure. The mean was 3.5 and the standard deviation was 1.191, both of which pointed to a possibly enough amount. Both the comments of the Sub county commissioner and the findings of Njenga's (2015) study highlight the need for sufficient personnel to effectively implement alcohol restrictions in Meru County.

This statement examines the accountability of Meru County's regulatory authorities charged with monitoring the sale of alcoholic beverages. According to the data, 9.4% of people in Meru County don't agree that alcohol commerce is regulated well by the relevant authorities. 75% of respondents agreed that these agencies have improved accountability in monitoring the county's alcohol trade, while 15% expressed no opinion on the matter. With an average score of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.913, it appears that these watchdogs have successfully strengthened accountability in their regulation of the alcohol trade in Meru County. These results were corroborated by the research interviews that were done. As one senior police officer from Nkubu police station, Nkuene ward put it, "Enforcement departments ensure that every alcohol business complies with all the necessary policies and laws." The findings of this study are also consistent with those of a previous study by Kamau (2014), who focused on the effects of the Meru Drinks Control Act of 2014 on the county government of Meru. The goal of this bill is to ensure that all parties involved in the production and sale of alcoholic beverages are held accountable.

4.4.3 Conformity with Policy Requirements and Regulation of Illicit Brews

The study third objective sought to determine the effect of conformity with policy requirements on regulation of illicit brews trade in Meru County. The responses are as indicated in Table 11.

Table 11: Conformity with Policy Requirements

Statements	N	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
County government agencies in Meru County has enhanced conformity	32	25.0	59.4	12.5	3.1	0.0	4.1	.716

Meru county has set effective standards and requirements relating alcohol trade	32	21.9	43.8	21.9	6.3	6.3	3.7	1.091
Programs have been initiated to regulate alcohol trade.	32	25	37.5	18.8	15.6	3.1	3.7	1.125
There is consistent assessment of alcohol trade businesses.	32	15.6	21.9	31.3	18.8	12.5	3.1	1.254
Majority of alcohol traders do not adhere to stipulate trading business hours.	32	9.4	18.8	31.3	25.0	15.6	2.8	1.203
Alcohol businesses are located 300m away from learning institutions.	32	18.8	43.8	15.6	15.6	6.3	3.5	1.164
There are high cases of alcohol sale to intoxicated persons.	32	18.8	37.5	34.4	9.4	0.0	3.7	.902
Manufacturers conform to labelling standards.	32	28.1	46.9	12.5	12.5	0.0	3.9	.963
Traders do not sell alcohol to under age persons.	32	28.1	53.1	15.6	3.1	0.0	4.1	.759
Hygiene is maintained within alcohol selling outlets.	32	18.8	25.0	25.0	21.9	9.4	3.2	1.263
Valid N (listwise)	32							

Source: Researcher (2023)

The results of a survey of the compliance of Meru County government entities with set norms and regulations are summarized in Table 11. The extent to which these organizations follow the rules shown by this information is important. Based on the results, we know that only 3.1% of respondents disagreed that these agencies were abiding by the requirements set forth, while 12.5% were agnostic, and an overwhelming 84.4% said they strongly agreed that these county government entities in Meru County are highly compliant. Meru's county government agencies are highly aligned with necessary standards, especially in the domain of alcohol regulation, as shown by an overall mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.716. Consistent with previous study conducted by Munene in 2013, these results show that 14 bars in Nkubu Town, Igoji town were shut down in 2014 due to infractions of alcohol rules and procedures, as mandated by the Meru Drinks Control Act of 2014.

Evaluating the rules and restrictions for the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County is similarly important, as it reveals the efficacy of local laws. The results show that 12.6% of people are skeptical that Meru County has implemented adequate regulations for the sale of alcoholic beverages, while 21.9% are on the fence about the issue. Sixty-five point seven percent of people polled were in agreement that Meru County had implemented efficient requirements and norms for the sale of alcoholic beverages. The overall mean of 3.7 and the standard deviation of 1.091 both attest to the success of these regulations in controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County.

Further, insights from an interview with a member of the county licensing committee corroborate these findings. The interview revealed that *"All individuals intending to engage in alcohol trade must ensure the available premises are suitable in regard to the nature of the license sought. Premises must conform to the prescribed requirements of health and safety regulations, and applicants must possess the necessary infrastructure and equipment to carry out the business. Additionally, premises should have a sufficient number of competent staff in*

line with prescribed norms." This information aligns with the research of Kamau in 2014, which indicates that the Meru County government established a regulatory body to ensure that manufacturing, packaging, and promotional standards adhere to the Alcohol Drinks Control Act of 2010, meeting the requirements stipulated by ISO 9001.

Results from a survey conducted on the topic of alcohol trade regulatory programs in Meru County show that over 60% of respondents are aware of the existence of such initiatives. When asked if they agreed or disapproved, 18.7% and 18% of respondents respectively. According to Martin's (2013) research, which highlighted the cooperation between the police and the community in regulating the sale of alcoholic beverages in Meru County, the county as a whole has a mean of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 1.125, indicating that substantial progress has been done in this area. The findings suggest there is room for improvement in how alcohol sales are evaluated consistently in commercial settings. There was a 37.5 percent concurrence rate among those who said there is consistent assessment, 31.3 percent disagreement, and 31.3 percent equivocation. The interviewees showed there were irregular assessments performed once a month or as needed. Muriithi's (2018b) research highlights the need for a more uniform and strict methodology, arguing that the current lack of uniformity in assessments creates a policy vacuum.

Forty-six percent of people polled didn't think that most alcohol retailers keep their stated business hours. Only 28.2% were in agreement, indicating a sizable gap. According to Gathura's (2015) analysis, the sale of alcoholic beverages is legal between the hours of 5 and 11 p.m., hence the Meru County Alcohol Regulation Board needs to enforce the law more strictly during those hours. In addition, 21.9% of respondents disagreed that most alcohol facilities are located no closer than 300m from schools, highlighting a potential safety issue. Sixty-two percent of respondents found agreement; nevertheless, a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.165 point to discrepancies that call for stricter adherence to the

regulating principles established in studies like that of Grubestic et al. (2012). The safety of schools requires concerted efforts to ensure nearby businesses maintain the required distance. This remark is very helpful in determining the frequency of the selling of alcohol to already drunk people in Meru County. The results showed that a sizeable percentage of respondents (34.3%) agreed that selling alcohol to minors was a serious problem in Meru County. However, 34.4 percent took a stance that was neither pro- nor anti-selling alcohol to people who were already drunk, and 9.4 percent strongly disagreed that this was a problem in the area. With a mean score of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 0.902, Meru County has a higher-than-average rate of selling alcohol to visibly inebriated customers. This is in line with the findings of a study by Gathura and colleagues published in 2015, which noted that, in response to strict Mututho laws, alcohol producers have turned to creative packaging to allow customers to buy alcohol for individual use, thereby increasing the likelihood that alcohol will be sold to intoxicated people.

This statement is helpful in understanding whether or not alcoholic beverage producers in Meru County are in accordance with labeling standards. According to the data, 25% of respondents in Meru County disagreed with the statement that manufacturers comply to labeling rules, another 25% had a neutral attitude, and 75% agreed with the statement. With a mean score of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.963, products made in Meru County generally adhere to labeling regulations. This confirms the findings of Gathura's 2015 study, which showed that in general, alcohol vendors do adhere to these guidelines.

This declaration was made in an effort to learn more about whether or not vendors in Meru County enforce laws against selling alcohol to minors. Only 3.1% of respondents were against the statement that merchants do not offer alcohol to minors, while 15.6% were unsure or did not react. Most respondents said that merchants in Meru County do not sell alcohol to minors. The findings, with a mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.759, are highly

indicative of vendors in Meru County abiding by laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to minors. This demonstrates that liquor stores strictly adhere to the Mututho Code and the Alcohol Drinks Control Act of 2010.

This statement can be used as a barometer of sorts for the cleanliness of bars and taverns in Meru County when it comes to serving alcoholic beverages. The results showed that 32.7% of people had a negative view that cleanliness standards are sufficiently enforced in bars and restaurants that offer alcohol, while 8% have a balanced view. In contrast, in Meru County, forty-three percent of respondents thought that hygiene is maintained adequately at these businesses. With a mean score of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 1.263, it's clear that these businesses fall short of the required degree of cleanliness, mainly because many of those polled either didn't know the answer or strongly disagreed with it. While it is true that all alcohol vendors are legally required to receive licenses from NACADA and the county department of public health, a 2014 study by Kamau highlights the significance of sanitation in these establishments.

4.5 Inferential Statistics

To create statistical conclusions, the researcher used inferential analysis, which included the results of a fitness model, an analysis of variance, and correlations between the study variables.

4.5.1 Correlation analysis

Table 12: Correlation analysis

		Policy regulation on alcohol trade	Licensing	Enforcement	Conformity with requirements
Policy regulation	Pearson Correlation	1			

alcohol trade					
		Sig. (2-tailed)			
Licensing	Pearson	.726**	1		
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
Enforcement	Pearson	.638**	.630**	1	
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		
Conformity	Pearson	.697**	.877**	.901**	1
with	Correlation				
requirements					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Researcher (2023)

The study's correlation results are listed in Table 12. According to the data, there is a significant positive relationship between licensing and overall alcohol regulation in Meru County ($r=0.726$, $p=0.0001$). The findings also show that enforcement policies have a favorable and substantial effect on the control of alcohol sales in Meru County ($r=0.638$, $p=0.0001$). The research also shows that in Meru County, Kenya, there is a positive and statistically significant effect of following the rules (correlation coefficient $r=0.697$, p -value= 0.000). The greatest correlation coefficient in the study was 0.726 , demonstrating the significance and impact of licensing policies on the overall regulation of alcohol in Meru County. Therefore, this analysis agrees with the findings of Kamau (2014), highlighting the centrality of licensing policies in determining the nature of alcohol regulation within the county.

4.5.2 Model summary

Table 13: Model Summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of
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			square	the estimate
1	.752 ^b	.566	.502	.31059

a. Predictors: (Constant), Licensing, Enforcement, Conformity with requirements

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 13 shows the results of the fitness model used in the regression analysis to better understand the phenomenon under investigation. According to the results, alcohol control in Meru County may be adequately accounted for by licensing policies, enforcement methods, and compliance with regulations. The results showed that the factors analyzed successfully explained 56.6% of the variance in the Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade in Meru County, as measured by the coefficient of determination, R square. This substantial proportional difference in alcohol control within the county was specifically accounted by licensing, enforcement, and adherence factors. The depth of the evaluation emphasized the model's sufficiency in most respects.

4.5.3 Analysis of Variance

Table 14: ANOVA

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
1	3.395	4	.849	8.800	000 ^b
Regression					
Residual	2.605	28	.096		
Total	6.000	32			

a. Dependent Variable: Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade

b. Predictors: (Constant), Licensing, Enforcement, Conformity with requirements

Source: Researcher (2023)

The degree of relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is represented in Table 14 by the ANOVA results, especially the p-value. It is generally acknowledged in statistical analysis that the crucial value, also known as the probability value

(p), must be greater than the significance threshold before the model can be called significant. If, on the other hand, the model produces a significance value below the critical threshold, this implies the existence of a statistically significant connection between the dependent and independent variables. Previous studies have shown that ANOVA can be used to evaluate the most salient differences across groups, as Howard et al. (2018) did. The results show that the model is generally significant in the conclusions drawn from the analysis. The study's independent variables, which include licensing, enforcement, and compliance with rules, also show promise as predictors of alcohol regulation in Meru County. A significance level of 0.000b (less than the more common 0.05) is supported by a F statistic of 8.8 for this.

4.5.4 Regression coefficients

Table 15: Regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	1.034	.119		28.347	.000
Licensing	.652	.040	.985	7.989	.000
Enforcement	.217	.055	.621	12.207	.000
Conformity with requirements	.757	.070	.384	8.151	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade

Source: Researcher (2023)

The regression coefficients for our study's independent and dependent variables are displayed in Table 4.38. These findings suggest that licensing policies have a significant impact on controlling the black market for alcoholic beverages in Meru County ($\beta = 0.652$, $p = 0.000$). With an effect size of 0.652, this data supports the hypothesis that licensing policies help curb

the black market for alcohol. As shown by ($r = 0.217$, $p = 0.000$), our findings also show a favorable correlation between enforcement policies and the control of the black market for brew in Meru County. In other words, enforcement tactics can help with controlling the illegal beer trade by a factor of 0.217.

Finally, the data demonstrates a positive association between compliance and regulation of illicit beer trade in Meru County, with the corresponding statistic being ($r = 0.757$, $p = 0.000$). Compliance with regulations has been shown to be helpful in controlling the black market for alcohol in Meru County, as seen by these findings.

The study's model can be expressed as follows:

Regulation of illicit brew trade in Meru County = $1.034 + 0.652$ Licensing policies + 0.217 Enforcement policies + 0.757 Conformity with requirements.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Summary, findings, and suggestions from the study are all presented here. Based on the study's findings and objectives, the authors made several suggestions for next steps and areas of investigation.

5.2 Summary of findings

The researchers in this study set out to determine how effectively alcohol control regulations in Meru County, Kenya, regulated the black market for alcoholic beverages. The bulk of the county's liquor stores are licensed, and the poll found that 68.7 percent of residents there support strict regulation of the alcohol trade. However, respondents were split down the middle (mean = 3.3) on whether or not county government entities were effective in licensing the liquor industry. Most respondents (mean = 3.3) were agnostic as to whether county government entities ensured fairness in administering liquor licenses, even though 6.7% felt that limiting the issuing of licenses considerably contributed to regulating the alcohol trade. Although opinions were divided on whether or not licensing decreased the overall production, distribution, and sale of alcohol in Meru County (mean = 3.1), 59.4 percent of respondents thought that the licensing process was effective.

The results of the study also looked at how the restrictions' enforcement affected the county's alcohol commerce. The results showed that, on average, respondents disapproved (mean = 3.0) of the idea that alcoholic beverages were sold at appropriate times and to appropriate people. Some 56.3% of people polled agreed that corruption hampered the effectiveness of all forms of regulatory enforcement. Despite this, most people (59.4%) still think that laws being enforced are good for public safety. However, 56.3% of respondents reported that they were

still worried about the presence of illicit brews in Meru County and that there was a perceived lack of public involvement in enforcing alcohol rules (mean = 2.6).

The study also analyzed how regulation compliance affected the booze business in Meru County. According to the findings, local government agencies successfully implemented alcohol trade regulations with an 84.4 percent compliance rate. The majority of respondents (65.5% in this case) believed that efforts had been made to regulate the alcohol trade, and that the trade was being consistently evaluated (mean = 3.1). However, there were obstacles, such as a large proportion of alcoholic beverage vendors not sticking to required business hours (mean = 2.8). Many respondents (56.3%), but not all (75%), found that alcoholic beverages were sold to visibly drunk customers. Furthermore, the majority (mean = 4.1) believed that it was illegal to sell alcohol to minors in Meru County. However, many respondents (mean = 3.2) were unsure whether or not bars and restaurants sold alcohol followed health codes.

According to the study, regulating the alcohol trade in Meru County is more complicated than previously thought. There is widespread agreement that licensing regulations have been beneficial, but there are still problems with enforcing them and making sure businesses actually comply with things like posted hours and sanitation standards.

5.3 Conclusion

This research found that elements including as enforcement, licensing, and adherence to regulatory criteria greatly impacted alcohol regulation in Meru County. Researchers found that everyone involved in the alcohol industry, licensing board members, chiefs, police, and the general public all had a solid grasp on the regulations that control the industry in Meru County. Further, the findings indicated that effective policies, such as licensing, enforcement, and compliance with regulations, could improve the region's ability to regulate the sale of alcoholic beverages.

5.4 Recommendations

It is critical to propose the following recommendations to improve the alcohol trade industry and mitigate its negative societal impacts in light of the research findings that indicate licensing, enforcement, and adherence to regulatory requirements significantly influence alcohol trade regulations in Meru. Effective strategies and resolutions for alcohol regulation in Meru County should be developed and implemented through collaborative efforts involving many bodies, including the County Alcohol Regulation Board, the Administration Department, and the Community Policing Committee. It is critical to evaluate licensing rules thoroughly to ensure their effectiveness in controlling the alcohol industry.

The government should also take preventative measures to inform citizens and government officials about the best practices for alcohol regulation and enforcement. To ensure that effective alcohol regulating policies are implemented, the government should undertake random, interim audits of enterprises involved with selling or producing alcoholic beverages.

5.5 Suggestions for further Research

The research was limited to Meru County because its central question was the effects of policy regulations on the black market for alcohol there. Similar studies should be conducted in different countries to compare the effects of alcohol legislation. However, it should be noted that the public's opinion on the alcoholic beverage industry was not explored in this study. Therefore, it is important to investigate how people in Meru County and elsewhere in Kenya feel about the alcohol trade in the years to come. This would help us get a clearer picture of how public opinion affects the sale and control of alcoholic beverages.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Informed Consent Form

Dear Madam/Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH

I request your participation in a research project titled "**Effect of Alcohol Control Policies on Regulation of Illicit Brews Trade in Meru County, Kenya.**" The study aims to understand the impact of alcohol control policies on the trade of illicit brews in the mentioned region.

The study's potential risks and discomforts are minimal as your involvement will be limited to completing a questionnaire. To ensure confidentiality, all respondents will be reminded and requested to keep the information discussed confidential. While there are no direct benefits to you personally, your voluntary participation and opinions are valuable for the research.

It's important to note that you will not receive any payment for your participation, and any information you provide will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Once the findings are published, the information will be appropriately discarded.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to refuse or withdraw at any stage if you so wish. If you decide to take part, please sign below:

Signature of participant: Date:

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us via the following:

Mobile phone:

Email:

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

MUGAMBI KINOTI ELEMANO

Researcher

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Part I: Demographic information

1. What is your sex? Male Female

2. How old are you?

Below 18 years

Age 18-35 years

Age 36-55years

Above 55 years

3. Marital status

Single

Married

Divorced

Divorced

Widowed

4. What is your religion?

Christian

Muslim

Hindu

Others -----

5. What's your highest level of Education?

Primary school certificate

Secondary school

College level

University level

6. Type of occupation _____

What's your monthly income?

Less than Ksh15,000

Ksh 15,000-30,000

Ksh 30,000-50,000

Above 50,000

7. Do you take alcohol Yes/No? If yes where do get the alcohol? _____ 10)

How often do you consume alcohol?

Everyday

Once per week []

Once per Month []

After couple of months []

Other

Part II: Roles of county government agencies in regulation of alcohol trade.

Liquor Licensing

Using the scale of 1-5 whereby 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-average, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

Statements	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Regulations of alcohol trade works properly					
Majority of liquor outlets are licensed					
County government agencies are effective in licensing of liquor industry.					
Issuing of licenses limits has helped as far as regulation of alcohol trade is concerned.					
County government agencies have ensured fairness in administration of liquor licenses.					
There is effectiveness in Licensing process					
Licensing has reduced manufacturing, distribution, and sale of alcohol trade					
Enactment of alcohol licensing laws has reduced number of illicit brews					
Penalties helps to regulate alcohol trade					
Majority of public are aware of licensing policies					

Enforcement

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-average, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

Statements	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Alcohol is sold at the right time and the right persons.					
Corruption has undermined enforcement role as well as regulation measures.					
Severe punishments for alcohol have reduce sale and distribution of alcohol in Meru County.					
Enforcement has enhanced public safety					
Police arrests has helped in regulation of alcohol trade					
There is public participation in enforcement of alcohol policies					
War on illicit brew is still a big issue in Meru County					
There are enough authorized personnel for enforcement in the county					
Enforcement departments have enhanced accountability in enforcement of alcohol trade.					

Conformity with Requirements

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-average, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

Statements	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
County government agencies in Meru County has enhanced conformity					
Meru county has set effective standards and requirements relating alcohol trade					
Programs have been initiated to regulate alcohol trade.					
There is consistent assessment of alcohol trade businesses.					
Majority of alcohol traders do not adhere to stipulate trading business hours.					
Alcohol businesses are located 300m away from learning institutions.					
There are high cases of alcohol sale to intoxicated persons.					
Manufacturers conform to labelling standards.					
Traders do not sell alcohol to under age persons.					
Hygiene is maintained within alcohol selling outlets.					

Appendix III: Interview Guide

- i. The following questions are designed to gather information about alcohol trade in Meru County, Kenya.
- ii. How long does a license take to be fully processed?
- iii. What is mostly considered for application of licenses to be accepted or rejected?
- iv. Who is mainly considered responsible for enforcement purposes?
- v. What is the key role of enforcement departments in the County?
- vi. What are standard measures in alcohol trade in Meru County?
- vii. How frequently is alcohol assessment done in Meru County?



Appendix IV: Budget

ITEM	QTY	COST PER UNIT	TOTAL COST
Transport	5	1000	5,000
Laptop	1	50000	50,000
Research Permits (NACOSTI)		1000	1,000
Typesetting	60 Pages	40	2,400
Printing of the Research	65	5@10	3,250
Subsistence	3	500	1,500
Accommodation	3	2000per Night	6,000
Data Collection, Pilot Study and Research Assistants Expenses	1	20000	20,000
Questionnaire	4pgs,400 Copies	10 Per Page	16,000
Date Processing and Analysis	1	35,000	35,000
Sub-Total			145,750
Contingencies at 30 % of the Subtotal			43,725
Grand Total			189475

Appendix V: Work Plan

Task	May - July 2023	Aug 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023
Title formulation					
Feasibility study					
Research proposal defense					
Data collection					
Data processing and analysis					
Research project presentation					
final correction and submission					

